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John Malcolm

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THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MAJOR-GENERAL

SIR JOHN MALCOLM, G.C.B.,

LATE ENVOY TO PERSIA, AND GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY;

FROM

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS AND JOURNALS.

BY

JOHN WILLIAM KAYE,

AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF LORD METCALFE," "THE HISTORY OF THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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MDCCCLVI.

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DEDICATION.

TO

THE HONORABLE MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE

THESE MEMOIRS

OF ONE OF HIS

MOST DISTINGUISHED COTEMPORARIES AND ATTACHED FRIENDS

ARE RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

As I believe it will be more generally asked why the Life of Sir John Malcolm was not written before, than why it now makes its appearance, I think it is well to state, that many years ago the late Captain Hamilton, the accomplished author of "Cyril Thornton," undertook to perform the task, which has since devolved upon me; but death arrested his labors. He had proceeded but a little way with his work, when he was thus prematurely lost to the world. Some of the earlier papers had been placed in his hands; he had marked a few passages in the correspondence, and he had written, with little result, some letters of inquiry to the few surviving friends of Malcolm's boyhood; but I have not been able to learn that he ever wrote a line of the Memoir.

From the time of Captain Hamilton's death, in 1842, up to the autumn of 1854, when I undertook to prepare the present work for the press, the voluminous correspondence of Sir John Malcolm (with the exception of one very valuable collection of letters) remained in the possession of the family, with the fullest intention on their part, as soon as fitting opportunity should present it-

self, of publishing some selections from it, accompanied with a narrative of Malcolm's eventful career. When this correspondence was placed in my hands, I found that the only difficulty it presented to the biographer was the difficulty of selection. Sir John Malcolm began, at a comparatively early date, to adhere rigidly to the custom of keeping copies of all his own letters on public affairs, and preserving those which were addressed to him. As these letters were, for the most part, arranged in books, and were in a very tolerable state of preservation, I had no reason to complain of the quality or quantity of my material. It is true that the records of Malcolm's early life were somewhat scanty; but this is a deficiency with which biographers have so commonly to contend, that neither writers nor readers feel any disappointment at its occurrence. It may be observed, too, that Malcolm, in his younger days, wrote both rarely and briefly to his friends; in that respect furnishing a strong contrast to Munro and Metcalfe, whose biographies are among the few exceptions to the rule of which I have spoken.

Voluminous as were the family papers placed at my disposal, they by no means constituted the whole of my materials. I had many large collections of Malcolm's letters in my possession before those papers passed into my hands. Some of the letters derived from foreign sources were the originals of those in the family letter-books. Others were hastily-written, but often suggestive communications referring to immediate topics of the day, of which no copies had been preserved. These undress effusions are often of more value to the biographer than more studied compositions; and it may be mentioned,

whilst on this subject, that the very best biographical materials at my command have been Malcolm's letters to his wife.

And I do not think that any reader will have just ground of complaint that I have suffered, in this work, the historical to overlay the biographical. The Life of Sir John Malcolm is the life of a man actively employed in the public service, with rare intervals, for half a century. And of these public services the Memoir furnishes a detailed account. But it may with truth be said, with reference to all the great historical events glanced at in this Memoir, that Malcolm was not merely in them, but of them—*pars magna*. To use one of his favorite expressions, the "laboring oar" was always in his hand. So large and so distinct was his individuality, that the man himself is ever to be seen in the foreground, impressing himself upon all the events with which he was connected, and shaping them by the force of his own personal character. I believe it would be no exaggeration to say that the History of India can be but imperfectly understood without an understanding also of the character of Sir John Malcolm.

And I am reminded by this of the obligations which I owe to some of the surviving friends of the subject of this Memoir, for oral communications of more value than written documents. As I never saw Sir John Malcolm, who died whilst I was on my way out to India as a cadet, I have endeavoured to the utmost to supply the wants of my own personal knowledge by gathering unrecorded information from those who knew him best. And as he was not one to pass readily out of the recollection of any

who had once known him, I have seldom failed to elicit some characteristic reminiscences from the cotemporaries whose assistance I have sought.

It remains only to be observed, that, with the exception of two or three letters, the correspondence quoted in this Memoir is now published for the first time. In the later editions of the Wellington Correspondence may be found one or two of the Duke's letters to Malcolm, which appear also in the first of these volumes. The publication of the remainder, however, has not been anticipated by Colonel Gurwood. There was no one to whom the Duke of Wellington wrote more unreservedly than to Sir John Malcolm. This unreserve has rendered necessary a cautious use of the correspondence; but enough is still given to show the intimate terms on which they corresponded, and to illustrate, at the same time, many interesting traits of the Duke's character.

On turning over these printed pages, before finally dismissing them to take their chance with the Public, and on again referring to the materials (literally a room-full) out of which the Memoir has been shaped, I cannot resist a strong sensation of regret at the thought of the many interesting and valuable papers still lying unused around me. I must console myself with the thought that a selection from these may some day be laid before the Public.

J. W. KAYE.

LONDON, *November*, 1856.

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ERRATA.

Page 42, line 10 from bottom, for "for those feelings," read "*to* those feelings."

Page 91, line 4, for "Ooshegs," read "*Oosbegs*."

Page 336, line 18, for "millah," read "*nullah*."

The name of Admiral Sir P. Malcolm should be spelt throughout "Pulteney."

THE

LIFE OF SIR JOHN MALCOLM.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOYHOOD OF JOHN MALCOLM.

[1769—1782.]

HIS HOME IN ESKDALE—ANCESTORS—PARENTAGE—MISFORTUNES OF GEORGE MALCOLM—THE FAMILY AT BURNFOOT—OFFER OF A CADETSHIP—JOHN'S VISIT TO LONDON—ORDEAL AT THE INDIA-HOUSE—DEPARTURE FOR INDIA.

On the banks of the Esk, in the parish of Westerkirk, three miles from Langholm, in Dumfries-shire, lies the estate of Burnfoot. In all pleasant Eskdale there are few pleasanter spots. There the heather-covered hills slope down towards the sparkling waters of the river, as it winds in a devious fantastic course over its stony bed, now between high wooded banks, and now between low grass-lands. A comely modern mansion,* almost on the water's side, stands where once stood the house in which John Malcolm was born.

The Eskdale Malcolms were a younger branch of the Malcolms of Lachore, in Fifeshire. The first who settled in Dumfries-shire was Robert Malcolm. Son of David Malcolm and Elizabeth Melvill, he had been educated for the Scottish Church, and, in 1717, on the recom-

* Now in the possession of Mr. William Elphinstone Malcolm.

mendation of the Lord President of Scotland, nominated by the Earl of Dalkeith to the ministerial charge of the parish of Ewes, which borders on Westerkirk. During little less than half of the eighteenth century he continued to occupy the manse, diligently and faithfully performing the duties of his office, dwelling among his own people, rich in their affection and respect. But the revenues of the parish were small, and it was with the kindly intention of increasing them that his patron granted him a lease of the farm of Burnfoot at little more than a nominal rent. The farm was in those days mainly a sheep farm. Literally and figuratively, the concerns of the Rev. Robert Malcolm were of a pastoral character. But he had married Agnes, daughter of the Rev. George Campbell, Professor of Divinity, a man of rare piety and learning, one of the ablest and best, indeed, of the old Scotch divines; and when, in due time, his son George grew to man's estate, he was entrusted with the management of the farm.

In 1761, to the grief of all his parishioners, the good minister died. In the same year, George Malcolm took to wife Margaret, daughter of James Pasley of Craig.* The young man had been intended for the Church, and had received with that object a liberal education; but some defect in his articulation caused an abandonment of the project, and he had devoted himself to agricultural and pastoral pursuits. On the death of his father, the lease of Burnfoot had been renewed to him, and he had become the tenant also of the adjoining farm of Douglan, under the proprietorship of his friend John Johnstone of Alva.

To George and Margaret Malcolm the words of the old Hebrew benediction were literally fulfilled. Whilst the good man cultivated the lands of Burnfoot, there

* And sister of Admiral Sir Thomas Pasley, Baronet.

grew up around him a thriving family of sons and daughters. But his worldly wealth did not increase with his progeny. George Malcolm was a strong-minded, an honest, and a pious man—but he was not a prosperous one. The necessities of a numerous family prompted him to look beyond his farm for means of support. He entered into speculations for which his previous habits had not fitted him; and carried on, in partnership with others, mainly with borrowed capital, they failed. Mr. Malcolm's private estate was saddled with a large portion of the debts of the concern; and all his little property was sold.

A close investigation into his concerns revealed only the just dealings of the man.* Many sympathised with him. Some were eager to assist him. Not last or least of these was his brother-in-law, Dr. Gilbert Pasley, Chief Physician at Madras, who in this hour of need rendered him essential service.

There was enough in this fatal miscarriage to cloud the happiness of any one. But George Malcolm of Burnfoot was something better than a man of a robust nature; he was a Christian in the largest sense of the word. "I know not at this moment," wrote one whose testimony is worthy of all acceptation† to one of

* He was so honest a man that he would not even cheat a friend, or a stranger, in horseflesh. On one occasion, he sent an agent to a fair with a very good-looking horse to be sold there; but charged him, at the same time, with a letter to be delivered to the intending purchaser, indicating the defects on account of which he wished to dispose of the animal. On another, the same agent was selling one of Mr. Malcolm's cows at Langholm Fair, when that gentleman joined the group who were looking at her, and said, "Ay, ay, gentlemen, she has a fine show of milk—but she does not give much."

† The Rev. Sir Harry Moncreiff, father of the late Lord Moncreiff, and grandfather of the present (1856) Lord Advocate of Scotland. Lord Cockburn, in his "Life of Jeffrey," says of him: "The prominent qualities of his mind were strong integrity and nervous sense. There never was a sounder understanding. Many men were more learned, many more cultivated, and some more able. But who could match him in sagacity and mental force? The opinions of Sir Harry Moncreiff might at any time have been adopted with perfect safety, without knowing more about them than that they were his."

Mr. Malcolm's children, "whom I could conscientiously compare with your father, in sterling worth, in sound understanding, in the best affections of the heart, in unaffected enlightenment and genuine godliness." He felt the burden that was upon him, for he was a man by nature of an anxious and sensitive temperament; but, sustained by a good conscience, he bore up bravely beneath it. There was not, perhaps, a day of his life in which he did not remember his misfortunes—but he suffered with true Christian resignation, and was thankful for the blessings which remained.

And chiefest of these were his wife and children. Margaret Malcolm was a woman of high principle and sound understanding—but womanly in all; of quick parts and ready resources; strong in doing and in suffering; but gentle and affectionate; a support in adversity to her husband; and to her children a tender, a watchful, but not an over-indulgent mother. How much they all owed to her it is difficult to say. She lived to be the mother of heroes, and was worthy of such a race.

To George and Margaret Malcolm ten sons and seven daughters were born; a healthy and a vigorous tribe, who forded the Esk, clomb the steep hill-sides of Douglan and Craig, and gambolled in the heather. There was a good parish school in Westerkirk; but, better still, there was plenty of fresh air and free scope for exercise, and the boys in early childhood, swimming in the flooded waters of the river, or scampering about the country on rough ponies, learnt lessons of independence, which were of service to them to the end of their lives.

Of these boys, John was the fourth. He was born on the 2nd of May, 1769.* If he was conspicuous for any-

* On the day after the birth of the [illegible]ter. It was emphatically a year of heroes. Napoleon Bonaparte was born in the same year.

thing in his childhood, it was less for a studious habit than for a certain quickness of parts, which enabled him to prepare his lessons as he trudged up the hill on his way to school; and for that fearlessness of heart and activity of body, the boyish result of which is commonly mischief. The tradition is, that "Jock" was the scapegrace and the scapegoat of the family. The Westerkirk schoolmaster, Mr. Archibald Graham, used to declare, whatever wild pranks were committed, that "Jock was at the bottom of them." No matter how little apparent his participation in the exploit may have been, still the preceptor clung to his formula, and exclaimed, "Jock's at the bottom of it."*

It might well have been a matter of serious concern, even to one in prosperous circumstances, how to provide for all these robust boys. To George Malcolm, after his misfortunes, it was the study and anxiety of his life. Fortunately he had many friends—friends in his own native Eskdale, and friends in the great English metropolis. For the eldest boy, Robert, an appointment was obtained as a writer in the service of the great Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies. James,† the second son, was provided for in the Marines, with a fair field of distinguished service before him. For the third boy, Pulteney,‡ a midshipman's berth was secured in a man-of-war, and he was on the road to become a great admiral, and one of England's best naval heroes. And now, when yet only eleven years old, John was set down in the Burnfoot book of fate for a military career in the East.

Among Mr. Malcolm's friends, it has been said, were

* The schoolmaster lived to address his old pupil as Sir John. There is an anecdote in the family, that on the appearance of his "History of Persia," Malcolm sent a copy of it to Mr. Graham, with an inscription on the fly-leaf of "Jock's at the bottom of it." I have not, however, been able to authenticate the details of this story.

† The late Sir James Malcolm, K.C.B.

‡ The late Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm, G.C.B.

the Johnstones of Alva. One of the family was the well-known "Governor Johnstone," whose influence at the India-House was not unwillingly exerted in behalf of the tenant of Burnfoot. By him a nomination to the military service of the Company was tendered to Mr. Malcolm for his son John before the close of 1780;* but the extreme youth of the boy rendered it doubtful whether the offer could be turned to immediate account. The winter and spring passed away, and Jock remained in Eskdale, at the bottom of all the mischief as before. But in the course of the summer a visitor appeared at Burnfoot, who proposed to carry off the boy to London, and obtained the parents' ready consent.

This was John Malcolm's maternal uncle, Mr. John Pasley, a London merchant of high character and position—a man of a kindly disposition and a generous nature, who had rendered much good substantial service to the Burnfoot party in their troubles, and whose knowledge of business was yet to be exercised to the profit of the younger members of the family. His summer visit to Eskdale was now a momentous one. It was agreed that Jock should return with his uncle to London. So mere a child was he, that on the morning of his departure, when the old nurse was combing his hair, she said to him, "Now, Jock, my mon, be sure when ye are awa'

* *John Johnstone to George Malcolm; December 6th*, 1780. "The enclosed, from my worthy brother, the Governor, is a fresh proof of his never-ceasing attention and sympathy to his friends. He thinks that John, the eldest of your boys now at home, if I have not mistaken his name, and who you told me was eleven years old, though young should nevertheless accept of this appointment. Could one be certain of such a hit hereafter, no question it would be more to be wished, but so many accidents may occur to disappoint, that young as John is, it may be doing the best thing to embrace the offer. My brother's health is far from being re-established, and his absence, or any accident to him, and my distance from the scene of Indian affairs, might render this appointment hereafter very precarious. . . . What I could wish most would be permission for John to remain behind for another year after his appointment, with the consent of the Directors. It would be happy, perhaps, could this be effected, but we must not depend upon it."

ye kaim your head and keep your face clean; if ye dinn ye'll just be sent hame agen." "Tut, woman," was t answer, "ye're aye sae feard; ye'll see if I were aw amang strangers, I'll just do weel aneugh."

And the brave words were truly spoken. At the e of July, 1781, young John Malcolm, accompanying h uncle, Mr. John Pasley, for the first time crossed th Scottish border. A journey of two days brought hi to the English metropolis, where he spent a week, nom nally in his uncle's house, but really abroad in th streets, seeing almost everything that was worth seein and enjoying himself beyond expression. During th brief period of sight-seeing his ideas began to expan wonderfully, and the childishness of his manners rapid disappeared.* But there was other education in sto for him than that of the great world. On the 7th August his uncle carried him to school, placing Joc under the charge of Mr. Allen, a gentleman who wa under some obligations to Mr. Pasley, and was sure, ther fore, to do justice to the boy.

It was Mr. Pasley's desire to obtain an appointmen for his nephew in the Company's military service wit the least possible delay. But the boy was only twelv years old; and though tall of his age, still of so juvenil an appearance, that there was little likelihood of h passing at the India-House. There were no fixed rule in those days respecting the age at which commission might be held, but the candidate had to appear before Committee of Directors, and from them to receive h credentials. There was no difficulty about John's nom

* *Mr. John Pasley to Mrs. Malcolm; August* 11, 1781. "I allowed him to remain with me all the week, that he might see and become a little acquainted with this immense city. His time was fully employed in traversing its streets, and during these few days he saw everything almost that was curiou and was delighted beyond expressio His ideas began to open, his behaviou is much altered, and on the whol hitherto, I have a very good opinion him."

nation; the difficulty was for one so young to pass the ordeal in Leadenhall-street.* The experiment, however, was to be tried. A free passage to India had been promised by Captain Tod of the *Busbridge*, and it was of importance that this should not be lost. So, towards the end of that year, 1781, John Malcolm was taken to the India-House, and was, as his uncle anticipated, in a fair way to be rejected, when one of the Directors said to him, "Why, my little man, what would *you* do if you were to meet Hyder Ali?" "Do, Sir," said the young aspirant, in prompt reply, "I would out with my sword, and cut off his head." "You will do," was the rejoinder; "let him pass." The lofty spirit of the boy atoned for his lowly stature, and that was granted to his big words which would have been denied to his few inches. John Malcolm's first commission was dated in October, 1781.

But he did not embark till some time afterwards. Captain Tod, it appears, was to have sailed in the following March; but circumstances with which I am not acquainted must have caused his detention till the autumn. In the mean while, John Malcolm continued to profit by the kindness of his uncle and the tuition of Mr. Allen;† and embarked for India, at least as well educated as the majority of lads who at that time, with small Latin and less Greek, set their faces towards the "shining Orient."

* *Mr. John Pasley to Mr. George Malcolm; November* 13, 1781. "Johnny, though tall of his age, I don't know how to dispose of. He certainly will not pass at the India-House, and Tod will sail in March. If he loses this opportunity, next year he may have his passage to pay for. In two or three weeks Tod is expected in town. I will consult him on the subject, and endeavour, if possible, to get him out. Another year at the academy would not hurt him; but though he would be by that means better qualified for his employment, the delay will be attended with many disadvantages, which I wish to guard against. Whether the appointment is for Madras or Bengal I shall be contented. On Bob's account I would prefer the latter, as his being sent to Madras might not, perhaps, be so agreeable to my brother, which would hurt both."

† Mr. Allen thought him so promising a pupil, that he deplored the boy's early removal, and offered, if it were connected with pecuniary considerations, to educate him gratuitously.

CHAPTER II.

SUBALTERN-LIFE IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

[1783—1794.]

ARRIVAL AT MADRAS—DEPARTURE FOR VELLORE—FIRST YEARS OF SERVICE—IDLENESS AND EXTRAVAGANCE—EARLY REFORMATION—THE WAR WITH TIPPOO—OPERATIONS OF THE NIZAM'S FORCE—ORIENTAL STUDIES—FIRST STAFF APPOINTMENT—RETURN TO ENGLAND.

On the 16th of April, 1783, the *Busbridge* anchored in Madras Roads. At that place young John Malcolm was received by the widow of his uncle, Gilbert Pasley. The lady had taken another husband, and now bore the name of Ogilvie. After a short residence at the Presidency, he accompanied his new friends to Vellore, and was appointed to do duty with one of the regiments composing the garrison of that fort. Having nothing else to do, he had grown much on the voyage; and his new friends were delighted with his frank, open manners, his sunny temper, and his genial, playful spirit.*

At this time the English in India were at war with

* *Mrs. Ogilvie to Mrs. Malcolm; Vellore, July* 5, 1783. "By this conveyance you will receive letters from your son Jack, who, I suppose, will tell you of our journey up here, and of the wonders he had seen in India. . . . . Jack came to us immediately on his landing from Captain Tod's ship, and happy was I, my dear sister, to receive your son, and to do all in my power to make him happy. He was too young to go to the field, so we brought him up here and got him appointed to the troops in this garrison. He is a very old ensign, though a very young lad. He is grown a head and shoulders, and is one of the finest and best-tempered young lads I ever saw, and very much liked by everybody."

Tippoo,* and at war with the French. When John Malcolm reached Vellore, a body of English troops was laying siege to the French position at Cuddalore. Tidings, however, came of peace in Europe; so hostilities ceased in India against our great continental rival, and left us to turn our undivided energies against our unscrupulous Mysorean foe. Those energies, however, were not exerted in a very formidable manner. Our councils wanted union, and our army wanted a head. There were indecent dissensions at Madras; and the loss of Sir Eyre Coote could not be adequately supplied. So, after another year of desultory warfare, during which no great advantages were gained on either side, negotiations were opened with Tippoo; and on the 11th of May, 1784, a definitive treaty was signed.

Among other articles of this treaty was one for the release of the prisoners taken by the contending powers. Many English officers, in the extremity of suffering and humiliation, had long been hopeless captives in the hands of Hyder Ali and his son. The peace, if it had no other good results, restored to liberty these brave, enduring men; all who had not perished under the cruel hands of their captors. Sir Thomas (then Major) Dallas, who had commanded the escort of the commissioners appointed to negotiate the peace with Tippoo, received charge of the English prisoners, and was instructed to conduct them to the safe precincts of our English territory. At the same time, a detachment of two companies of Sepoys was sent out from our side of the Mysorean frontier to meet Dallas's escort on its way from Seringapatam. In command of this party went Ensign John Malcolm. This was his first service—and it was long remembered by

* Hyder Ali had died in the preceding year, so Johnny Malcolm was spared the necessity of making good his promise at the India-House by cutting off his Highness's head.

others than the youthful hero himself. When the detachment met the prisoners' escort, a bright-faced, healthy English boy was seen by the latter riding up to them on a rough pony. Dallas asked him after his commanding officer. "*I* am the commanding officer," said young Malcolm. Amid something of pride on one side and amusement on the other, a friendship was formed between the two, which nothing but death terminated. Dallas, who lived to a green old age, survived to see the bright-faced English boy grow into one of the most distinguished officers of his day; and there were few of the reminiscences of his long life to which he recurred with greater pleasure than to this his first meeting with Malcolm, in the old time when Warren Hastings was Governor-General of India.

Of the next five or six years of the young soldier's life the records are very scanty. But I am not sure that the absence of authentic materials relating to this period of his career is much to be regretted. He arrived in India, and was his own master before he was fourteen—an age at which the majority of boys of his station are drinking weak milk-and-water, and being whipped into Latin hexameters. I am afraid that he was not a prodigy of youthful virtue. He was a fine, free-spirited, active, excitable boy, fonder of play of all kinds than of study—a good horseman, a crack shot, accomplished in all gymnastic exercises. In his regiment, and wherever he was known beyond his regiment, he went by the name of "Boy Malcolm"—a name which he retained many years afterwards—there was something so open and joyous in his manner, so active, and so frolicsome. Of course he was beset by all manner of temptations. What he resisted, and what he did not, I do not particularly know; but he was soon immersed in debt, and surrounded by all its attendant difficulties.

One anecdote relating to this period of his life is extant. Being with his regiment at some out-station, and in very straitened circumstances, paying off his debts, I believe, as best he could, and scorning to borrow from his comrades, he was often sore beset for a meal. One day the colonel of his regiment sent for him and said, "I don't see any smoke come out of the chimney of your cook-room, Malcolm—come and breakfast with me." The young soldier fired up at this indelicate invitation—an unwarrantable interference, as he thought, in his private affairs; and he either actually called out the colonel, or was with difficulty restrained from sending the challenge. I have heard, too, that at one time, in the course of these years of early struggle—probably at the identical period to which the above anecdote refers—an old native woman in the bazaar voluntarily supplied him with provisions, for the payment of which, she declared, she was content to wait his own time and convenience. For the good feeling thus displayed, Malcolm was ever grateful; and his gratitude took a practical shape, for he pensioned the good woman to the end of her days.*

It was about the year 1787-88 that the dawn of better things commenced; and young John Malcolm began to see the folly of his ways. He had begun life early, and before he was nineteen was able to speak of himself—and truthfully too—as a reformed character. He was at this time stationed with a wing of his regiment at Masulipatam—where his eldest brother, Robert, was residing as Company's agent—and had made so much progress in

* To render this more intelligible to the purely English reader not acquainted with the history of the Indian services, it should be stated that at this period the pay of the younger Company's officers was much smaller than it is at the present time. This cautionary sentence, however, will be unnecessary to those who have perused Sir Thomas Munro's delightful letters (in Mr. Gleig's Memoir), in which he speaks with so much good-humor of the early hardships to which he was exposed for lack of funds to procure ordinary comforts.

the detail-work of professional duty, that he was appointed to act as adjutant of the detachment. The earliest letter preserved by his family touches on these points, and expresses in a few words so much good penitential feeling, that it would be unjust to the young soldier to omit it:

JOHN MALCOLM TO HIS FATHER.

Masulipatam, Feb. 9, 1788.

My dear Father,—My not receiving a single line from you last season, made me almost suppose you thought me no longer worthy of your advice, as I had made such a bad use of what you had formerly bestowed upon me. I must own to my shame you had too much reason to think it would be thrown away. All that I now expect is, that my friends will forget the past (I hope I may now say) part of my conduct. I have informed my mother how very agreeably I am now situated, though I believe I shall not remain long here; as I have been six years and four months an ensign,* I expect promotion every day, and with it a removal. I am at present doing duty as adjutant of that part of my regiment stationed here. Though I receive no pay for doing that duty, it is a great recommendation to a young man to act, as it gives him a chance, when any vacancy happens in the staff line, to be appointed and receive the allowances annexed.

I would with pleasure give you some idea of the politics of this part of the globe if I was in any way competent; but they are so little known, that it is almost impossible to meet with a man who can give any account of them. The Mahrattas and Tippoo have ceased hostilities for this some time past. The latter is now in the field against one of his own vassals on the Malabar coast, called Ibed Beg—but I suppose he will soon be crushed, as it is not possible for him to bring forces nearly sufficient to cope with his master.

I am, dear father,
Your affectionate and dutiful son,
John Malcolm.

* From this it would appear that his first commission was dated in October, 1781.

this paragraph, I am sure, will think otherwise. I walked nearly the whole way, as my horse was sick; and we frequently marched at twelve o'clock at night, and did not arrive at our ground till two P.M. next day. We were sometimes greatly distressed for provisions—often forty and fifty hours without any—but that was little compared to the dreadful want of water on the road. You can have no idea of that, as, thank God! you never could have experienced it. Officers in general supply themselves, and have a servant for the purpose; but, in some of our long marches, I have seen men raving mad, go into high fever, and die in a few hours. We are going on service in a few days."

At Bhoospore, the detachment joined the army of the Deccan. The Nizam himself had made a great show of taking the field with all his chief officers of state. His force was computed to number, camp-followers included, 500,000 people, and to cover an area of ten miles by three or four. It was rather an immense migratory multitude than the moving camp of a regular army. The mixture of barbaric splendor with disorder and confusion—the strong contrasts presented everywhere by the magnificence of the Court and the ragged grotesqueness of the inferior components of the motley force—made a strong impression upon the imagination of the young soldier. But that which most filled his mind at this time, was the thought of the misery inflicted on the people of the country through which he passed, by the cruelty and rapacity of the Nizam's troops. Every kind of extortion was practised upon the inhabitants both of their own provinces and the country on the other side of the border after they had passed into Tippoo's dominions. Cowards to the strong—tyrants to the weak—they made enemies, without any local dis-

tinctions, of all who had no power to resist their merciless aggressions.*

The history of Malcolm's first campaign may be given in a few sentences. "When we marched from Rachore to the enemy's country," he says, in an early paper which I have found in a somewhat fragmentary state, "we were said to be accompanied by from 25,000 to 30,000 of the Nizam's troops, with a respectable train of artillery. But this was far from the truth. 18,000 horse and foot were the utmost extent of our numbers, and, with very few exceptions, a more complete set of ragamuffins was never assembled. . . . Nothing worthy of remark happened before we entered into Tippoo's dominions. . . . We met with no place to impede our progress to the westward in the Doab till we came to Copoulee and Behaudur-Bundur—two forts within a mile and a half of each other. . . . Copoulee is, without exception, the strongest place I have seen in India."

After a protracted siege, the place surrendered. "Six tedious months," as young Malcolm wrote, "were spent opposite the fortress, and some valuable lives were lost before it was finally carried." The work fell principally upon the European artillery; and we had then early experience of a fact which subsequently came to be universally understood, that little or no reliance is to be placed

* The following may be taken as an example of the atrocities committed by the Nizam's people—it shows the manner in which the ransom money was collected from a conquered village: "The scene which presented itself to the British officer was beyond all description shocking. The different quotas to be paid by each inhabitant had been fixed; and every species of torture was then being inflicted to enforce it. Men and women, poor and rich, were suffering promiscuously. Some had heavy muskets fastened to their ears; some large stones upon their breasts; whilst others had their fingers pinched with hot pincers. Their cries of agony and declarations of inability to pay appeared only to whet the appetite of their tormentors. Most of those not under their hands seemed in a state of starvation. Indeed, they were so far distracted with hunger, that many of them, without distinction of sect, devoured what was left by the European officer and Sepoys from their dinner."—[*MS. Memoir by John Malcolm.*]

on native allies, and that therefore, in all nominally conjoint operations, it is expedient to act independently of them. But it was less by the physical agency of our guns than by the moral effect produced by the fall of Bangalore that Copoulee was eventually subdued. Of this fact, the bare outline of which is traced in History, all the more dramatic details are given in one of Malcolm's later journals:

"The strong fortress of Copoulee," he wrote, "had been besieged for six months without our making any practicable breach; but the commandant, from the whole of the country round being conquered, entered into a negotiation for its surrender. The result of this depended in a great degree upon the truth of an account which had been received of the fall of Bangalore. The Minister of Dara Jah asserted that this was the case; but the persons deputed from the fort expressed their doubts of the fact. They were asked what would satisfy them of its truth? 'If Sadoollah Khan* says it is so, we will believe him,' was the reply. He was sent for, and the question put to him. 'I have heard it reported that Bangalore has been taken, but have no positive knowledge of its truth,' was the reply. The Minister was quite indignant, whilst the deputies from the tent exulted at his answer. But he requested of both to be allowed to satisfy himself by going to the English camp. I was in the tent of the commanding officer, Captain Read, when he came to him and asked if Lord Cornwallis had taken Bangalore. Captain R. said he had. 'I beg your pardon,' said he, mildly; 'I know an English officer always speaks truth, but have you received accounts of this event through a channel in which you repose entire confidence?' The official letter which announced it was shown and explained to him. He thanked Captain R., and went direct to the tent where the conference was held, and addressing the deputies, said, 'Bangalore has been taken by the English.' Not a question (I was assured by a person present) was asked, nor an observation made, further

* Sadoollah Khan was a Mussulman chief, of Arab stock, who was held in high repute for his scrupulous veracity and good faith in that part of the country.

than the deputies lamenting the bad fortune of their sovereign. They returned into the fort, and the capitulation was instantly signed."

Behaudur-Bundur capitulated a few days afterwards, and the garrisons of both places were humanely permitted to retire without molestation.

After some further operations of no great moment to this narrative, the detachment to which young Malcolm belonged was ordered to join the main body of the Nizam's army, which, accompanied by the Resident, Sir John Kennaway, was then assembling to march upon Seringapatam, and co-operate with the British forces under Lord Cornwallis.

The records of this period of John Malcolm's life are very scanty; but I know enough to declare that we now see him at the turning-point of his career. In the camp of the Nizam he became acquainted with Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Græme Mercer, and others of the diplomatic corps then representing British interests at the Court of Hyderabad. He soon grew into favor with them, and lived for a time in familiar intercourse with the magnates of the Residency. The high position which they occupied; the important duties entrusted to them; the stirring life which they led, fired his young ambition. He began to ask himself whether he might not do likewise. A new world opened out before him. He burned to be a diplomatist.

The first step towards this consummation was to acquire a competent knowledge of the language of the Native Courts. He determined that he would study Persian. His friends of the Residency encouraged this good resolution, and Mr. Græme Mercer lent "Boy Malcolm" the services of his moonshee. And very resolutely did the young man apply himself to the mastery of the

Oriental character and the construction of the language.* His younger companions laughed at him, and endeavoured to lure him back to his old pursuits. But he had laid aside his gun, and manfully declared that he would not fire another shot, or mount his horse again, until he had made certain progress in his studies.

And he studied to some purpose. Nor was it to the native languages alone that he applied himself at this time. He seems to have begun not only to reflect, but to record his reflections upon the interesting events which were passing before him—upon the character of the people by whom he was surrounded—the nature of the connexion existing between the British power and the Native States; and the conduct to be observed by the

* See the following extract of a letter from Mr. Græme Mercer to Captain Hamilton: "Our acquaintance commenced in 1791, when I was attached to the Residency at Hyderabad, and John joined us as an ensign in the detachment of Madras troops which was settled by treaty to be stationed in the Nizam's country. He soon became a favorite with us all, and particularly with Sir John Kennaway, the Resident. He was then a careless, good-humored fellow, illiterate, but with pregnant ability. He took a fancy to learn Persian, and I made over to him my moonshee, under whom he made rapid improvement. The Residency soon afterwards marched with the Nizam's son and Minister to join Lord Cornwallis's army, and I have no recollection what became of Malcolm, but a faint one that he had lost his health with the detachment, and returned to the Company's provinces."

In another letter, addressed to Mr. Elphinstone, the same writer says: "He was quite illiterate when he joined us, but an adept in all games, and a capital shot; and, in short, possessed an intellect which only required to be set a-going, either for good or evil. He had been accused of gambling before I knew him; but I never heard of his exercising his talents in that way after he had been engaged in any employment of consequence. His overflowing spirits made him riotous, and he was generally known by the name of 'Boy Malcolm.' I think I recollect his *speeling* the tent-poles with Edmonstone, and probably all of us; but gymnastics formed a great part of our amusements, and he excelled in them. I gave him the use of my moonshee for some time, and he dubbed him 'Long Tom.' Ten years afterwards, on his return from Persia, when we were both voyaging up the Ganges with Lord Wellesley, John came into my boat. Finding his old friend Long Tom with me, he embraced him most cordially, and began to narrate his adventures; but, stopping short, he said, 'It is nonsense to be prolix—in short, whatever you have *read*, I have seen.' 'Ay, Boy Malcolm,' replied the moonshee; 'I hope you will indulge me then with particulars of the journey of Mahomed to heaven upon a Borak.' This, John said, was one of the few points he had not had an opportunity of inspecting himself, or ascertaining from others."

former. He was, in a word, preparing
duate in the school of diplomacy, eager
whereby he might obtain admission even
class. And it was not long before such
seemed to present itself. Referring to this
life, Sir John Malcolm, in after years, used
a vacancy having occurred in one of the diplo
of Southern India, he was prompt to make
for the post; but was anticipated by a quarter
As he entered the great man's tent to prefer h
he met, issuing from it, a young officer upon
appointment had been conferred.* He was to
he had called a little sooner, the assistantship sho
been his. Thus he lost it; and so bitter was
pointment, that on returning to his tent he threw
down and wept with very grief and vexation.
loss, though he knew it not, was great gain to h
was nothing less than the gain of his life. The
who had anticipated him had no sooner proceed
the scene of his new duties, than he was murder
open Court. It was not the man, but the office-bea
the representative of the English Conqueror—who
been marked out as the victim: so Malcolm, had he
suffered, in this instance, to shape his own course, an
succeed in his own way, would have perished misera
at the very threshold of his diplomatic career. T
lesson was not thrown away. It was often dwelt up
in after years, gratefully and reverentially, and impress
with becoming fervor on his children. He whose wa

* There is necessarily more or less vagueness in all traditionary anecdotes of this kind. Whether the appointment for which Malcolm applied was in the gift of one of the Residents (perhaps Sir John Kennaway), or whether at a little later period, as may be inferred from the preceding note, he wa in Lord Cornwallis's camp, and the ap plication was made to the Governor General himself, must remain a matter of doubt. The story, however, loses little by this want of circumstantiality in its details.

are not our ways had mercifully vouchsafed to preserve him, turning the apparent failure into a bountiful deliverance, and teaching him the folly of human repinings.

It was after the field-operations briefly noticed above that young Malcolm, for the first time, attempted an historical record of the events in which he had been an humble actor. In this early paper may be traced the germs of much which in after days made up the perfection of his character as a soldier and a diplomatist—a mixture of firmness and gentleness—of sagacity and courage. I have mentioned how much the oppressions exercised by the Nizam's troops upon the defenceless people weighed upon his mind. It is pleasant to learn that the forbearance and good conduct of the Company's troops presented a remarkable contrast to the licentiousness of their allies. On this fact the young narrator dwelt with manifest delight. After recording an instance of the protection afforded by a British officer to some persecuted villagers, he proceeded thus with his narrative:

"It fell to my lot afterwards to witness an occurrence not very dissimilar to the afore-mentioned, where the commanding officer, by a spirited refusal to comply with a requisition of men for oppressive purposes made by a leader whom he was ordered to assist with troops when required, not only gained the approbation of the English Resident at Hyderabad, but the esteem and respect of his own troops and those of our ally. The latter are lavish in their admiration of the justice and discipline observed by the Company's troops, though they never think of imitating them. I cannot here omit mentioning a trifling anecdote to the credit of our Sepoys. Whenever the guard paraded to march to the ill-fated village I have mentioned, they made a collection of as much rice as each man could afford to give for the starving inhabitants. This was distributed when they went. Such conduct (which was not confined to this single instance) was deemed folly, and excited a smile of pity on the countenances of the unfeeling, plundering horsemen of the Nizam's army, but made different impressions

the inhabitants of the country. They, accustomed to the worst of treatment, received at first with suspicion and hesitation the kind protection which we always gave them when in our power. Convinced of its reality, and of our acting thus upon system, they spread our fame far and near. The sight of a Company's Sepoy quieted the minds and gave assurance of safety to a body of unfortunate wretches who, the moment before, were trembling at the thoughts of being plundered, and perhaps murdered, by our allies. I could observe no difference in the conduct of the Irregular Horse when in their own country and in that of the enemy. They seemed to consider the defenceless everywhere as their prey, and to attack all under that denomination indiscriminately. The spirit of intrepidity which our Sepoys showed in defending those they were ordered to protect, deterred our allies from venturing on plunder where they saw them posted. The strong prepossession which the inhabitants of every country through which the English detachment marched must have had for them, may, in some future day, be of the highest value. Reputation for justice and humanity preceding an army is of more consequence than an advanced guard of 10,000 men."

From the following noticeable passage, taken from the same early paper, it may be gathered that even at this period of his life he had reflected upon those principles of conduct in accordance with which, in maturer years, he shaped his diplomatic career:

"An invariable rule ought to be observed by all Europeans who have connexions with the natives of India—never to practise any art or indirect method of gaining their end, and from the greatest occasion to the most trifling to keep sacred their word. This is not only their best, but their wisest policy. By this conduct they will observe a constant superiority in all their transactions; but when they act a different part—when they condescend to meet the smooth-tongued Mahomedan, or the crafty Hindoo, with the weapons of flattery, dissimulation, and cunning, they will to a certainty be vanquished. For a successful practice in these little arts, perhaps no people on earth excel the natives of India. They begin the study as they learn to speak, and continue

it with unintermitting application through their lives. A friend of mine who lately came to India, strongly struck with this characteristic, observed, that from what he had seen he was convinced that if a bag containing a thousand pagodas were placed between William Pitt and a Madras Dubash, and if the attainment of the money so placed were to depend on specious art and cunning, the former would not get ten out of the thousand. I shall conclude this long digression with recommending a very circumscribed and cautious confidence to be placed by Europeans—especially those in power—in their native servants. Men who neither have, nor pretend to have, honor themselves, are not the properest guardians for that of others; and when they are detected in having pursued their interest beyond the strict bounds of justice, the master, however innocent, meets with heavy censure; and though his guilt is short of what an ill-natured public think of it, he deserves blame for having placed confidence where he was not warranted. Lord Cornwallis, whose abilities, joined to the opportunities he had of gaining information on this subject, give his opinion the greatest weight, on all occasions testified his marked disapprobation of employing the natives in a confidential manner, and held the master strictly responsible for the acts of his servants."

Nor is the following less remarkable as an indication of the early growth of those opinions respecting the collision of the commercial and political elements in the constitution of the East India Company, and the inexpediency of suffering the former to predominate—opinions which came to be moulded into a leading article of faith with the disciples of what in after years was called the "Malcolm School" of Indian politicians:

"Economy in a Government is, no doubt, a most laudable quality. But it may easily be carried too far; and, by an imprudent practice of it in a rigid degree, it is possible, without any injustice, to ruin the country. The Court of Directors give credit to that Governor who realises the best revenue; he gives the same credit to inferior Boards, they to collectors, and so on: thus a system of realising on the public account as much as possible is established; and if a person of a more liberal judgment points out

the good policy of building granaries, of repairing tanks and roads, of restoring choultries, of walling villages—in short, of any measure that he thinks would tend to the comfort or safety of the inhabitants—that he thinks would alleviate, if not entirely prevent, the horrors they are, from their situation, likely to suffer from war or famine—he is treated as a speculator, and his counsel neglected. In short, they know that the expense attendant on all such schemes would be considerable, and that lessening the revenue even for one year is not the way to gain the approbation of their honorable employers."

In the autumn of 1791, John Malcolm fell sick, and was compelled to proceed to the Coast. He had borne up against the summer-heats better than he had expected;* but in November, although there was much stirring work on hand, for Lord Cornwallis was preparing to advance on Tippoo's capital, his health was so shattered by long exposure to the climate, that he was necessitated to quit the Camp and visit Madras.† From the Presi-

* "I have kept my health," he wrote to his friends at Burnfoot, "as yet, better than could have been expected from being obliged to march at such a season. You will think me a traveller, when I assure you that the thermometer has been upwards of 100 degrees every day since we left Kurpa, and was, the day before yesterday, 110 degrees, in the coolest tent of the lines. We have not had a shower of rain for four months, and have little prospect of being blessed with any for two months to come. The state of the country is indescribable. So many of the inhabitants have already perished from want, that even if a fall of rain would admit of their once more cultivating their country, I am afraid that there are not enough left to perform the work of cultivation. . . . . We have our Camp at present in a thick wood near the hills. We expect daily to move towards our old fort, Copoulee. It and all the countries around it were ceded by the late treaty to the Nizam. The inhabitants found the difference between the mild and just government of Tippoo and the oppressive and weak management of the Nizam too great to bear. They were plundered by the Nizam's officers, and have, in consequence, rebelled. We are to be sent to reduce them—poor wretches!—to obedience, and to be the instruments of oppression. It is with the utmost difficulty that rice is procured to supply our troops; and as the supplying the Camp almost entirely falls on my station, I cannot now leave Camp, which I intend to do as soon as possible, and to pay a visit to my brother and the sea-coast." This letter, like many of Malcolm's at all periods of his career, is without date. How much easier biography would be, if so large a portion of its materials were not, for want of some record of the time and place of their birth, utterly valueless without an exercise of inference and analogy very troublesome indeed to the biographer.

† I have not been able to trace the precise spot at which he quitted Camp and proceeded to the Coast, but if Malcolm at this time (the latter end of 1791) was, as Mr. Græme Mercer re-

dency, where it would seem that he was almost tempted to apply for leave on sick-certificate to England, and to take his passage in the *Manship*, he wrote to his mother, on the 9th of January, 1792, "You will learn from other letters the situation of my health. I leave this in four hours for Camp. The packet *Canada* is this instant come from England. I have as yet got no letters, but am just going into the fort along with Mr. Haliburton (at whose gardens I now live) to try and get some, if there are any for me. Mr. Petrie has promised much, and his behaviour to me since I came down to Madras has been very attentive. I have not seen Colonel Harris yet, but will, I hope, soon. He is able to serve me if he has inclination."

And it was well that he did not return to England. Had he done so, he would have lost an opportunity which might never have been regained. He joined Lord Cornwallis's camp before Seringapatam, and his merits were soon recognised and rewarded by that nobleman. It happened that an officer with some knowledge of the Persian language was required to act as interpreter to the troops serving with the Nizam; and Malcolm, then a lieutenant, was selected, on the score of especial fitness, for the post. It is probable that Sir John Kennaway, who accompanied the army, brought his young friend's qualifications to the notice of the Governor-General. Be this as it may, John Malcolm had now planted his foot on the ladder; and from this time, to the close of his career, he was uninterruptedly employed on the Staff.*

lates, "spceling tent-poles with Edmonstone," he must have reached the head-quarters of the army; for the latter gentleman was at that time Persian translator to Lord Cornwallis, who was at Bangalore in November.

* Nearly thirty years afterwards, Malcolm wrote to his old friend, Mr. Cockburn: "I served as a regimental officer with European and Native corps (without ever having one week's leave of absence) for nine years. In 1792 when at Seringapatam, I was appointed Persian interpreter to the detachment serving with the Nizam by the Marquis Cornwallis, on the express ground of being the officer with that corps best qualified for the station."

On his return to Camp, he wrote to the family at Burnfoot:

"I wrote you last when I was on my return to Camp, after an absence of two months, which my health necessitated me to make. I was very near taking my passage at that time in the *Manship*, and I almost wish now that I had. I should have been, at this time, most probably enjoying good health and amongst my relations. Don't think that I have any great attachment to those cold regions that you live in—so far from it, that were my relations in India, I never would think of home. When I can afford it a little better than I now can, I will, *sans doubte*, take a trip to see my friends, and at the same time renovate a broken constitution.

"When our little Camp was ordered to halt here, we were warned from building, as our stay was supposed to be very uncertain. But this could not prevent a set of men who had been three years in bad tents from housing themselves. In short, we thought it was impossible to pay too dearly for a little comfort, and erected a cantonment of very excellent buildings. My house consists of a hall, bedroom, cook-room, and stable, which cost me about three hundred rupees. I have now been in it six months, and if I moved to-morrow would not repent the expense. I am a hard student at the Persian when other business does not intervene; and when I meet with a pretty story, shall send a translation home to my sisters. . . . . Why don't they think of sending out a young brother? I want one, that I may play the elder brother and monitor—parts that I am just beginning to learn how to act."

It would seem that soon after his return to Camp, the state of his health little recruited by his brief visit to Madras, compelled him again to repair to the sea-side.*

* This is stated on the authority of Mr. Græme Mercer, who, in a letter already quoted in part, says, "On our return to Hyderabad from Seringapatam, I accompanied Sir John Kennaway to the sea-coast, to rally a little after our campaign, when Malcolm joined us. He was then very unwell, and his constitution seemed to be so much broken that I strongly urged him to get leave to return for some time to Europe. He took my advice,

There he met his friends Sir John Kennaway and Mr. Græme Mercer. The war with Tippoo had been brought to a close before the end of February; and the Residency having returned to Hyderabad, these gentlemen had gone down to the Coast to recruit their energies after the fatigues of the campaign. The climate of the country had for some time been doing its sure work upon Malcolm's constitution. He had been much exposed to the sun during the worst season of the year, and his health had suffered to such an extent, that it was beyond the power of a brief sojourn at the sea-side to repair the ravages it had sustained. He was unwilling to return to England, for he believed that he was now in a fair way to rise in his profession. But it was impossible to struggle any longer against the increasing debility which rendered exertion painful, and good public service almost an impossibility. His friends counselled the trial of a milder climate. Sir John Kennaway himself was then about to return to England, and he recommended that Malcolm should accompany him. The good advice was not thrown away. The young soldier sent in his papers, obtained leave of absence, and in the cold season of 1793-94 prepared to embark for England. In the course of February,* the vessel in which he had taken his passage sailed out of the Madras Roads; and under the invigorating influence of the pure breezes on the open sea and the *dolce-far-niente* of life on shipboard, his health soon began to revive.

Of this homeward voyage I know little, except that he devoted some part of his abundant leisure to the study

and as Kennaway was also returning to Europe, Malcolm embarked with him in the course of the following season."

* "In February, 1794, I was obliged to embark for England for the recovery of my health, which had suffered severely from the fatigues to which I had been exposed during the four years that I had been in the field with the Nizam's detachment."—[*MS. Memorandum.*]

of the Oriental languages, in which he was assisted by his friend Kennaway. That he either quarrelled, or intrigued, or over-ate himself, as men are wont on shipboard, I do not think very probable. But I have little doubt that he promoted and took active part in every frolicsome expedient for relieving the tedium and diversifying the monotony of the voyage, which his own ingenuity or that of his fellow-passengers could devise. Even a retiring Governor-General, embarking in the midst of an unexampled crisis, has been known to divert himself with pitch-and-toss on the way home. And we may fairly assume that "Boy Malcolm" played at ship-billiards and leap-frog on the quarter-deck, and at whist in the cuddy; that he shot Cape-hens, haply an albatross or two; speared porpoises and bonetes, and angled off the poop for sharks. It would have been very much unlike him, not to have been foremost in all such recreations as these.

In the course of July he reached England, from which he had been absent some twelve years. They had been years of toil and trial bravely and hopefully encountered. He had borne the burden and heat of the day during those years as one of the working officers of the army; and they had made him a good soldier. Henceforth we shall see him mainly in the character of a diplomatist and an administrator. But he had learnt much during his early subaltern-life in Southern India—much that was never forgotten. The habits and the feelings of a soldier clung to him throughout his career. Whatever might be his official environments, his heart was continually turning with a tender and sympathising interest to the single-poled tent of the regimental officer and the matted hut of the faithful Sepoy.

CHAPTER III.

FURLOUGH TO ENGLAND.

[1794—1795.]

RESTORATION OF HEALTH—DETENTION IN LONDON—INTRODUCTION TO GENERAL CLARKE—VISITS TO BURNFOOT AND ALVA—RESOLUTION TO RETURN TO INDIA—ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VOYAGE—APPOINTMENT TO THE STAFF OF GENERAL CLARKE—DEPARTURE FROM ENGLAND—CAPTURE OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

THE records of John Malcolm's sojourn in England at this time are but scanty. The benefit which he derived from the homeward voyage was so great, that he had scarcely set foot on his native soil before he began to think that he was in a condition to return to India again. Nothing but necessity could keep him away from the scenes on which something within him whispered that he was destined to achieve distinction.

It was great joy to him to be in Eskdale again—to receive the blessings of his parents and the embraces of his sisters—and to look with a man's eyes upon the dear old burn and the familiar hills, which had put on their best purple to greet him. But he had work to do in London—not the less imperative because it was not marked out by others, and written down in an order-

book. So the autumn found him busy in the great metropolis; with his heart at Burnfoot all the same.*

The constitution of the Anglo-Indian army was at this time a prominent subject of investigation and discussion with the authorities of the East India Company and the Crown, and in all military circles throughout India and the mother country. The Company's army had for some time been in an extreme state of depression. It was ridden over at all points by the royal service. The Company's officers did all the drudgery work; the King's bore all the honors. For the former there was no higher rank than that of colonel. The battalions were commanded by captains. Promotion was intolerably languid. There were no retiring pensions. There was no furlough-pay even for sick officers. This state of things, severely felt as it was throughout the commissioned ranks of the army, had been readily apprehended by the benevolent mind of Lord Cornwallis, who had drawn up a scheme for the reorganisation of the Indian service, which was naturally regarded with extraordinary interest by all whom it concerned, both at home and abroad. From the armies of the three Presidencies deputies were despatched to England to watch the momentous proceedings of the authorities; and wherever the English uniform was worn, or

* To one of his sisters he wrote in October: "I fear there is little prospect of my being down in Scotland as soon as I expected. The present is a very eventful time for my interests, and I must attend to it myself, or I cannot expect others will. I want no extra-inducements to hasten my return to Burnfoot. My inclinations, when I can indulge them, will always lead me there, for rest assured that I drag a lengthened chain everywhere else." From another letter, written a week afterwards, I may take a brief passage: "My uncle and I," wrote John Malcolm, "went to see the new play; but finding the doors of Covent Garden Theatre not open, we wandered over to Drury Lane, and were tempted in to see Shakspeare's *As You Like It*, which was inimitably well performed. Mrs. Jordan acted *Rosalind*. She is incomparable. The plaudits bestowed upon her shook the house; and she deserved them all. No one ever copied nature with more success. I wish you had her in Langholm for a fortnight."—[*October* 30, 1794.]

men were gathered together who had once worn it, there was this great project earnestly discussed.

It was natural that a question so important in itself, and personally so interesting to every officer of the Company's service, should have engaged at this time much of Malcolm's attention. He communicated his ideas respecting the claims of the Company's officers to many men in authority at home, and appealed to the general Public through the medium of the Press. His first appearance as a public writer was in a long letter signed "MULLAGATAUNAY," and published, I believe, in the *North Briton*, in which the whole question is considered in a very clear and comprehensive manner. The grievances under which the Company's officers labored were described, one by one, in language at once forcible and moderate. He dwelt upon the galling fact that no officer of the Indian army could, by the existing system, rise higher than the rank of colonel. He spoke of the services that had been rendered by men brought up in the bosom of that army—by Lawrence, by Clive, by Smith; of their knowledge of the manners and languages of the people of India, which gave them "innumerable advantages over a general immediately appointed from home;" and asked whether it was just or politic to tell such a body of men that they were not only forbidden to aspire to the chief command,*

* Speaking of the chief command, he said in a subsequent paragraph: "I freely own that I conceive the station of Commander-in-Chief of any of the three settlements to be one of so serious and important a nature, and to involve so much responsibility, that I am convinced the selection of a man for that office will and always should remain in the hands of the Ministry; but I hope they will be happy to seize the first opportunity that offers of showing that when they meet with a man whose known abilities and past actions speak him equal to the task, his being a Company's officer shall be no preclusion to his being elevated to that distinguished rank. It ought, on the contrary, to give him additional claims." Sixty years have passed since this was written; but the invidious distinction of which Malcolm then complained has not yet been practically removed. No officer of the Company's service has been appointed to the chief command of one of our Indian Presidencies, up to the time in which I now write—the summer of 1855.

but that they were never to attain any higher rank than that of colonel—"in plain language," he said, "that they were only qualified to fill subordinate stations, and that men educated on the fields of Germany or America should be regularly sent to lead them to victory on the plains of Hindostan." Then he referred to the stagnation of promotion in the Company's army. He showed how, in an army lacking the higher grades, and recently subjected to great reductions in the strength of its establishment, the avenues to promotion were necessarily blocked up; he pointed out that a battalion of Sepoys, as the army was then constituted, of the strength of a King's regiment, was commanded by a captain and eight subalterns, and that a captain of one of the royal regiments, commanding only a company, superseded the Company's officer in command of an entire corps. "To obviate this," he said, "and to give that promotion which the Company's officers have such good reason to expect, it is requested that a lieutenant-colonel, a major, and a similar number of captains and subalterns as are deemed necessary for the discipline and duties of a corps in every other service, be appointed to each Sepoy battalion."* "This measure adopted," he added, "the stream will again flow; hope will take the place of despondency. The drooping veteran will revive, and anxiously seek an opportunity of showing he is not ungrateful to his country for the notice it has deigned to take of him."

Having brought forward other cogent arguments in support of the expediency of increasing the number of Sepoy officers, Malcolm proceeded to point out the third

* It need hardly be said that the reorganisation here spoken of was carried into effect. But owing to the increased longevity of Indian officers, promotion is not more rapid than it was under the old system. In this paper Malcolm says: "By a calculation made on the average of the three Presidencies, the youngest major-general would have served in India thirty years," &c. The average age of the major-generals of the Company's service is now sixty-two; which gives an average of more than forty years of service.

great grievance of the Company's army—the want of proper Furlough and Retiring Regulations. He showed that if a Company's officer, on account of ill-health contracted, or wounds inflicted in the public service, was necessitated to leave the country for a while, his pay immediately ceased until his return; and that, in consequence of the non-existence of any "comfortable and honorable retreat for the wounded and infirm veteran in his native country, he was compelled to pass the rest of a short life in an ungenial climate, banished from his native country and from every one he holds most dear, or return to his friends, after an absence of twenty years, an object of charity, abandoned by those masters in whose service he had lost his blood, or spent his days of vigor and youth." We read of this state of things now as we do of the rack or the thumb-screw, with curious antiquarian interest. The Furlough and Retiring Regulations of the East India Company's army are now the most liberal and most humane that have ever been devised for any military establishment in the world.

Having thus set forth the peculiar grievances of the Company's army, Malcolm declared that there was good reason to believe that they would be speedily removed, as the interests of the Company's army had been entrusted to good and to true hands:

"It is peculiarly fortunate," he wrote in conclusion, "that those who from their stations must decide on the claims of the Company's army, are men eminently qualified for the task. The Court of Directors are disposed to grant every relief; and Mr. Dundas, President of the Board of Control, has in his plans for the Government of India evinced a most extensive knowledge of the British interests in the East, and has suggested a mode of securing and improving them that does equal credit to his wisdom and liberality. No man could give a more enlightened opinion upon this subject; but he, and every other person, seem to turn their eyes upon the Marquis Cornwallis as the person who, from great abilities and recent experience, is best calculated

to recommend a satisfactory plan for the new modelling of the Indian army. And from whom can the Company's officers expect a more equitable consideration than from that elevated character who for a period of six years had a daily opportunity of observing, and so often gave the most flattering testimonies of his approbation and admiration of their conduct? No one ever more lamented the grievances he saw they were at times obliged to endure, from the narrowness of the system upon which their service is now established. . . . . In my opinion, the interests of the army cannot be in better hands. I may be accused of being too sanguine, but I shall never cease to think as I now do until the event proves that I have erred."

This paper attracted some notice at the time, and in conjunction with other communications of a more private character, recommended the Madras subaltern to the consideration of men in authority. Among others who recognised the value of the document, and noticed with commendation the writer, was Mr. Dundas, the President of the Board of Control.* It was the first of those numerous elaborate papers on the military affairs of our Indian Empire, which caused him in time to be regarded as the very first authority on all subjects connected with the affairs of the Indian army.† Nor at this time were all his efforts made with the pen. He was one of many Company's officers who met in London to deliberate on the affairs of the army. "I will accompany Pulteny to Cambridge to see you if I can," he wrote, on the 21st of

* In a memorandum of his services, written many years afterwards, Malcolm says: "When in England, circumstances led to my making public my sentiments on the military arrangements for the Company's army, which were then under discussion; and the tendency which those sentiments had to inform and satisfy the public mind upon that subject was recognised by Lord Melville, then President of the Board of Control, and several other distinguished characters, in terms flattering to my feelings."

† See the latest testimony to this effect in the speech of Sir Erskine Perry, on the 10th of May, 1855. The speaker, however, erred when he cited Sir John Malcolm as an authority in favor of the amalgamation of the Queen's and Company's army. This subject will be noticed in a subsequent chapter of the Memoir.

October, to his brother Gilbert, then a student at that university, "but I have been attending meetings (no treason) these last two days, and shall be in the same predicament for four or five more. A ship soon leaves this for India, and the Company's officers now in London are attending to the interests of their fellow-soldiers. You will change your address of *Lieutenant* to *Captain* in a month or two."

It would seem that during this sojourn in London he renewed his acquaintance, either personally or by letter, with General Ross, who had been secretary to Lord Cornwallis; and that partly through the General's influence, and partly through that of Colonel Dirom, who had been Quartermaster-General during the first Mysore war, and had written a history of the campaign, he was recommended to the favorable notice of Sir Alured Clarke. That officer was about to proceed as Commander-in-Chief to Madras, and appeared not unwilling to listen to the recommendations which were made to him in favor of Lieutenant Malcolm. At what precise period the introduction took place I do not know; but it led in time to important results, and shaped the whole future of Malcolm's career.

There were others, too, with whom he renewed his acquaintance—his brothers Pulteny and James. They arrived from the West Indies in October, and John met them with a full heart, delighted to embrace them again. Both were on the high road to distinction. It was a happy meeting, made happier by the circumstances that, during his brief visit to London, Lord Chatham, then First Lord of the Admiralty, made Pulteny a post-captain, and soon afterwards appointed him to the command of the *Fox*.*

The family pictures of the young sailor drawn at this

* "I was fully resolved to visit Cambridge, but yesterday Lord Chatham put it out of my power by appointing me to the *Fox*, well manned and ready

time are very charming. "I never saw Pulteny look so well," wrote one of his sisters from Burnfoot, to which he paid a brief visit in November. "He is very handsome, and has the most open, manly countenance I ever saw. His manner is uncommonly cheerful, and he possesses a flow of good-humoured raillery. He will be the delight of every party he enters. He only stayed with us one week."

Of James, too, "our open-hearted, generous James," these sisters wrote in terms of loving eulogy. And what said they of John? We may be sure he did not appear less attractive in their eyes. "I dare say," wrote one sister to brother Gilbert, then studying at Cambridge, "you are longing for a letter about our Indian brother. The cause of our silence is really the delight we take in that brother, which makes us regret every moment we are absent from him. When every one prepared us to love and admire him, we scarcely dared hope our expectations would be fulfilled; and I must not hesitate to pronounce them surpassed." "I do not think I have written to you," wrote another sister to Gilbert, "since I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with this most excellent brother, of whom I think more highly than I can express. His heart, head, disposition and manners, are truly excellent. Any one of them taken separately, and placed among even unpleasant qualities, would render a character worthy of admiration; but when united, as in his attractive person, they form a character that does honor to the human race. Your friend Mrs. Elliot writes of him in the highest terms; and Mr. Johnstone says he is the finest young man he ever saw." Good reason, indeed, had those young Eskdale lassies

for sea. I shall join her to-morrow. John is with me, and will, I hope, accompany me to Portsmouth. The few days I spent at Burnfoot were delightful. Nowhere do I find such a house." In the *Fox*, Pulteny Malcolm carried out Colonel Arthur Wellesley (the Duke of Wellington) to India.

to be proud of three such brothers as James, Pulteny, and John Malcolm!

Nor were these all of whom something must be said in this place. George Malcolm, it has been stated, had ten sons. Robert, the eldest, as has been shown, was in the Madras Civil Service. Then followed James, Pulteny, and John. Thomas, the fifth son, was engaged in mercantile affairs; and two younger brothers, David and William, were in training for a similar line of life. Another son, George, a Lieutenant in the Navy, had died early in this year (1794) of yellow fever, at the boyish age of eighteen.* Charles, then a boy, was to enter the same service under Pulteny's protection; and Gilbert, the sixth son, was then a student at Cambridge; a youth of promising talents, amiable disposition, and unostentatious piety, which ripened into the perfection of a character suited to the career that was marked out for him—the peaceful career of a country clergyman.

* The death of George cast a broad shadow over the family party at Burnfoot, and filled every member of it not only with grief for the dead, but fear for the living. Pulteny and James were in the West Indies, within the influence of the yellow fever, and John, by the last accounts, in bad health in the East. In a family of seventeen children, it was a proof of the signal favor of the Almighty that death up to this time had not once broken in upon their happiness. But for the very reason, perhaps, that they were so favored they felt the blow most severely when it came. The family letters, written early in 1794, contain many such passages as these: "We have many causes of alarm at present. You would observe the arrival of the *Queen Charlotte*. She seems to have spoken with several homeward-bound ships, in one of which we hope John may be. Sometimes we flatter ourselves that Robert or John may have written, but if no letters come by this day's post, this hope will vanish. Were we to hint to my father our hopes that John may arrive in tolerable health, he would consider us wanting in feeling." —"Pulteny, I fear, is in the greatest danger. That fatal fever still rages. May our Almighty God preserve him. What a shock George's death will be to James on his arrival. But nothing is to be compared with what poor Pulteny must have felt on going on board the *Penelope* to see him for the last time." — "We had two of the kindest letters from uncle John (Pasley). He is very anxious, he allows, about John, but he will not suffer a gloomy thought on the subject. God grant he may reach us in tolerable health." — He arrived in such excellent health and admirable condition that many jokes were cut at his expense. One of the Directors of the Company, on seeing him, observed drily, that "the Indian gentlemen have a happy knack of recovering the health on the voyage."

Nor were the sisters of the family unworthy of their brothers. "You said a great deal," wrote John to a member of the family, "but I now think that you gave but a cold description of Burnfoot and its inhabitants." He was as much pleased with them as they were with him. The meeting could not have been a happier one.

But the happiness was only too brief. The young soldier spent his Christmas at Burnfoot; and it would seem that, during the visit, he finally resolved to return to India in the course of the ensuing spring, with a good prospect of accompanying General Clarke as secretary or aide-de-camp. From Burnfoot he went to Edinburgh, and thence to Alva, the estate of the Johnstones. From that place he wrote to one of his sisters at Burnfoot, on the 18th of January:

"You don't seem pleased with my resolution to return to India; but I am sure I will convince you when we meet that I have not only acted a prudent part, but that I should have been highly culpable had I done otherwise. I applied to Mr. Bell, and rather exaggerated than diminished in my account of both my past and present ailings; and his opinion was decided and positive for me to go. 'There is a tide in the affairs of men,' &c., and I like to go with the tide in my favor. I have tugged against it in my day.

"My uncle John, in answer to my letter from Burnfoot, strongly objects to my return, and urges much against it. In his answer to a very full one I wrote from Edinburgh, he allows that the reasons I give for the part I then determined to act were unanswerable, and that he could not but approve. I am yet in the dark with regard to General Clarke's motions, but must be in London before the middle of February. *If* I go with him (there is much virtue in your *if*), most undoubtedly it will be as one of his family. . . . . I pass my time very pleasantly here. I keep much within doors for two reasons:—1st. The continual fall of snow for some days past has rendered both riding and walking disagreeable. 2ndly. My legs are quite recovered, and I wish not to induce a relapse by too early exertions. I am sorry I was not at home to see and hear Catherine Armstrong. Tell Minny that she speaks of her so highly, that I will waive all con-

siderations of caste, and do hereby empower her to open a treaty of matrimony between her and me."—[*Alva, January* 18, 1795.]

I am told that during this winter he attended some of the college classes in Edinburgh, to which attractive city he returned after his visit to Alva. There are those now living who remember him at that time as a light-hearted, amusing young man of five-and-twenty, with a great thirst after knowledge, and a prodigious memory. He would give the substance, often the very words of a lecture which he had heard, with extraordinary accuracy, or repeat a sermon (sometimes imitating the peculiar manner of the preacher) with equal fidelity. The society of Edinburgh delighted him. It need hardly be said that he was hospitably entertained in a city where every man of good character and intelligence is sure to be hospitably entertained. "You are acquainted with this town," he wrote to his brother Gilbert, on the 22nd of February. "It is, in my opinion, one of the most agreeable I ever was in. Probably the flattering attention I have met with makes me a partial judge. But as there is no place in the world where such encouragement is given to literary men, so I believe there are nowhere to be found men of more deep learning and science. Learning is a plant cultivated in proportion to the demand. Independent of the medical line, the law, and some others, the numerous professors' chairs hold out rewards both of fame and fortune to the aspiring youth. . . . . I have been both instructed and entertained by a casual attendance at some of their classes. I have given up a good deal of my time to the Oriental Professor, a sensible, modest man. His name is Mudie. I have read Persian with him whenever I have had a leisure hour, and have found him grateful to a degree for the little instruction I could give him. I was so happy to be made acquainted with Dr. Blair, and was in the

habit of paying him frequent visits, until our intercourse was interrupted by a severe misfortune happening to him. His wife, a partner of forty-six years, fell a victim to the severity of the weather."*

A boy who goes out to India at the age of twelve can carry little education with him. John Malcolm had long felt the want of scholastic training, and had been endeavouring to compensate for it by assiduous self-cultivation, carried on as it always must be under difficulties, amidst the turmoil of the camp. The idea of improving his mind had been ever present to him when he turned his thoughts towards home, and had had no small share in inducing him to return to England. "The satisfaction of seeing my relations and the improvement of myself," he wrote to his mother,† "exclusive of the perfect re-establishment of my health, are very great inducements to a man of my way of thinking." "My favorite amusement," he said, in the same letter, "is reading; and being assisted with a good memory, I seldom have occasion to read a work twice. Of all reading I prefer history. It pleases most upon reflection, and the impressions it makes are more lasting. Poetry is a pleasant relaxation, but I believe I expose my want of taste when I confess that there are very few poets that I can dwell upon with much satisfaction. I have for some years past made the languages of this country my

* The winter was a very severe one. In this letter Malcolm says that he was detained at Edinburgh "by an irregular sally of this charming climate for the short space of thirty-two days."

† In this letter, written before his departure from India, Malcolm says: "I left you all so very young that you must have but a faint recollection of me; and what a pleasure it would be to see again those who are so dear to me! I have a flow of spirits that never leave me; and though they have supported me through a long illness, yet I believe it was to them I owe it, as they led me to pursue my amusements with but too little consideration to my health, which was first impaired by a too frequent exposure to the climate in hunting, shooting, &c. As I grow older I shall grow steadier, and pursue both my amusements and my studies with less warmth, and very probably with more advantage. I have sincerely told you what I am, and though I have many foibles, I trust I have few vices."

study, more with the hope of their being useful than entertaining, as their knowledge is very confined, and nothing new to be met with amongst them. I lament much the want of a branch of education which never ought to be neglected in the forming an officer—a complete knowledge of mathematics and drawing. I have labored a good deal to improve myself in these sciences, but the want of proper masters has prevented me from attaining any proficiency in them. If I were ever to revisit my native country I should apply myself closely to these studies." And that he did all that he could do when the time came to fulfil these intentions we may be sure. But great as was his desire to improve himself by entering upon a new academical career, his opportunities were but scanty. The winter was scarcely over when he found himself again in London. All doubts, not only as regarded his return to India, but the situation in which he was to return, had passed away. He was to go out again to Madras, not as an unconnected subaltern, but as a member of the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief. "I go to India this season," he wrote at the end of March, "and shall have been about eight months in my own country before I embark for the East again. But I have not lost one hour of the eight months. Every day has been more joyful than yesterday. I look forward with apprehension to that period when I shall be less alive (for I never can be dead) for those feelings which have made me so happy since I came to Britain." At the end of April he was busily occupied with the necessary arrangements for his voyage. "My departure is yet uncertain," he wrote to Burnfoot on the 28th, "but I am determined the arrangement of my little matter shall not be put off to the last day, and am therefore now despatching my trunks for Portsmouth."

The time for his departure was, however, very near. Whether he had, before shipping his lighter goods for

Portsmouth, taken leave of his family at Burnfoot, or whether, previous to his embarkation, he was able to pay another visit to Eskdale, does not very clearly appear. The parting must have been a painful one; for at the age to which his parents had now attained there was little hope of his ever seeing them again. The benediction which he then received he well knew would be the last in the flesh. The spirit might often go forth to bless him; but those venerable hands had now performed their office for ever.

In the month of May he embarked at Portsmouth. "I have this moment," he wrote on the 14th of that month, "received orders to go on board, as our ship is getting under weigh. I am appointed Secretary to General Clarke, on a secret expedition. My prospects are very flattering." The vessel in which he sailed formed part of a considerable fleet of Company's ships, conveying a large body of European troops to India under the General's command. Of the early part of the voyage I have no private records. It is to be gathered from public despatches* that the fleet stretched out to the coast of South America, and was detained for some time at St. Salvador.† At the beginning of September they sighted the western coast of the Cape of Good Hope, and at daybreak on the 4th looked out upon the picturesque many-coloured hills sloping down to St. Simon's Bay, in which they were securely anchored.

The colony was then in the very crisis of its fate. Its destiny, trembling in the balance, was decided by the opportune arrival of the troops under General Clarke. Whether the Cape of Good Hope was thenceforth to be a Dutch or an English settlement was the great practical question now to be solved. General Craig and Admiral Keith Elphinstone had been for some time main-

* General Clarke to Mr. Dundas, in the Annual Register for 1794.
† Bahia.

taining an unequal contest with the Dutch burghers; and never were reinforcements more welcome than those which Clarke now brought to their aid. But I may leave the story to be told by Malcolm himself, who was a witness and a participator in the events which transferred the Cape colony to hands by which it has ever since been retained:

"We anchored," he wrote in a long narrative and descriptive memorandum, drawn up shortly afterwards, "in Simon's Bay, on the night of the 3rd of September. The General, &c., went on shore next day to see Sir George Elphinstone, whose squadron was lying there. We were soon informed that they were at open war with the Dutch, who had refused to accept of the favorable terms which Sir George and General Craig had offered them. The latter, with a little army of about 2000 men, principally seamen, was encamped at a place called Muysemburg (seven miles from Simon's Town, on the road to the Cape), from which a party had been driven five weeks previous to our arrival, by the fire of some men-of-war sent for the purpose. It had not been judged proper to advance further. Frequent skirmishes had taken place, in which three men on our side had been killed, and three officers and seventeen or eighteen privates wounded. Both fleet and army were in anxious expectation of our appearance, as they had lost all hopes of succeeding without our aid. No time was lost in landing our three regiments and artillery. They were marched immediately to Muysemburg. Their junction made the whole about 5000 men, 3000 of which were soldiers. The remainder were sailors and marines.

"Our greatest difficulty was the transporting provisions to camp. They were carried in boats within two miles of the camp, and from that on the soldiers' backs. The sea at times run very high in the bay to which the boats came, which rendered the task very arduous. But the decided and zealous admiral soon surmounted this difficulty, and principally from his exertions we were enabled to march on the morning of the 14th, with four days' provisions on our men's backs. Eight days' provisions and a quantity of military stores were left under the charge of a strong party at Muysemburg.

"The army marched in two columns. The principal, with

which were the Commander-in-Chief and Major-General Craig, consisted of 3000 men. With it were ten 6-pounders and two howitzers. Its route was the high road for Cape Town. The other column, consisting of 1600 men and two 6-pounders, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, marched to the left, to scour the country in that direction. The grenadiers and light infantry were detached to the front, and on the right flank of the main column; and the corps of marines covered the left. Before this column had advanced five hundred yards we observed scattered parties of Burgher horse preparing to annoy our right flank. They were mounted on small but active horses, and were armed with long guns. Some of them had attendants on foot who carried a second firelock. They appeared to have no discipline; and any person who had seen irregular cavalry must instantly have concluded them to be a very contemptible enemy. These Burghers were the farmers of the country, who were far the most violent party against any terms being entered into with us. Unaccustomed to fire at anything but roebucks or ostriches till our arrival, they were eager to try their hand at 'new game,' as they used scoffingly to call our troops. They had met with petty successes against the advanced party of General Craig's little army, whose prudent conduct in not advancing against Cape Town till General Clarke's arrival they readily construed into a fear of their prowess.

"But all their golden dreams were doomed to vanish on this day. Though the ground was particularly favorable for the species of warfare they carried on—high sand-hills covered with brushwood, and intersected with deep *lagunes,* which were only fordable at particular places, which they knew, and of which we were ignorant—they no sooner perceived that our troops were not intimidated by their fire, but advanced as rapidly as the ground would permit, than they fled from one height to another, keeping up an irregular fire, seldom nearer than a quarter of a mile. This skirmishing continued for nearly four miles. The country then opened, and we came to a level plain, about a mile and a half in breadth. On the other side was the hill, or rather eminence of Little Wyndburg. To this, after a little galloping about the plain, the Burgher horse retreated, and joined a party of infantry who were already formed on the summit. Their number appeared altogether nearly 1200—400 of which were cavalry. They had nine field-pieces. The post they occupied was very strong by nature, and the high road lay immediately

through the centre of their line. It was possible, as I afterwards found from observation, to have passed to the right of Wyndburg and out of reach of their cannon. But this circumstance was not known at the time to any one in our camp.

"We halted at the beginning of the plain for the column under Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, who, from want of proper guides, had been much detained. They joined about four o'clock, and the whole immediately advanced.

"A detachment of 800 men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mackenzie, were ordered to turn the enemy's left flank; and one of 600, under Lieutenant-Colonel M'Murdo, to turn their right; while the remainder advanced in two lines to attack in front. They opened their guns before they could reach us; when we were nearer, some of our field-pieces were advanced, and opened a brisk and well-directed fire, which very soon threw them into confusion; on which the corps composing the front line were ordered to advance. Alarmed at this, and at the appearance of the parties on their flanks, the enemy took flight. Having excellent cattle, they easily drew off their guns. Our advanced corps pursued them till they reached the Great Wyndburg. Here, as it was dark, the General ordered the whole to halt and lie on their arms for the night. We found the casualties of the day had been very trifling—particularly considering the great noise that had been made. One man killed and about twenty wounded (two of whom are since dead) on our part; and a few more on that of the Dutch.

"The fugitives carried the alarm into the town; and at ten o'clock at night a flag came from Governor Sluyskin, &c., requesting a truce for forty-eight hours: one for twenty-four was granted. General Craig met some commissioners from Cape Town half-way from Camp on the morning of the 15th, when the capitulation was agreed upon; and on the 16th the fort, the ordnance stores, &c., were taken possession of for his Britannic Majesty.

"Nothing could have been more fortunate than the termination of this affair. Had the original terms offered by Sir George Elphinstone and General Craig (before the arrival of our fleet) been accepted, our commanders would have been tied down to the invidious task of supporting a system of government deservedly odious to almost all classes. The divided authority of the civil government, under the Prince of Orange, and the military, under his Britannic Majesty, would have proved a continual source of

discord. No blame can be inferred from this on these two commanders, who acted under direct orders from home, and whose primary object was to get possession by any means. The force they had was not equal to the reduction of it; and the arrival of our fleet in time was uncertain. On the other hand, had they obliged us, by continuing an infatuated resistance, to attack the lines, the consequences would have been dreadful. Our success would have been certain; and no power could have restrained an army composed, like ours, of wild sailors, and raw—I might almost say undisciplined—soldiers, from carnage and plunder. Of their tendency that way we had sufficient proofs. General Clarke, by taking every precaution possible, prevented any depredations of consequence.

"We were no sooner in possession of the place than the commanders began to try by every means in their power to quiet the minds of the inhabitants, to conciliate their affection, and to reconcile them to the sudden change of government. This, to judge from outward appearance, they were successful in; for, in a very few days, all seemed restored to its former state. The women, who had mostly fled to the country on hostilities commencing, returned. Even the most violent Burghers, allured by the prospect of gain, began to bring in their cattle. Every man followed his former occupation, and a stranger would not have believed a change had happened."

From this memorandum of public events, which contains one of the clearest narratives of the circumstances attending the surrender of the Cape which I have ever read, we may turn now to the record of Malcolm's individual impressions. In a passage of a letter to his eldest sister we see not only what he thought of the Cape and its people, but what he thought of his situation on the General's Staff, and how he was employed during the two months which elapsed before his departure:

"I remain behind with the General, and do not expect to leave this before the 15th of November. My situation with General Clarke is everything that I could wish. He is a man of a stamp not often met with—mild and gentlemanlike in his manners, clear and just in his own conduct. He is a declared foe to all dark dealings and to peculation; and in everything that

regards the Government he is scrupulously just beyond any man I ever knew. He never will, I am convinced, himself make an indirect halfpenny; nor allow any person whom he can control to do it. This is a proper man for an Indian to be with, for you know we are all reported to have very different sentiments. He carries on a good-humoured war with my negligent habits, and my desire to please him makes me endeavour to conquer them. I never was a swearer; but I can venture to say I never now, even in an unguarded moment, let slip an oath. He abominates the practice.

"This is a charming place—not very large, but uncommonly neat and clean. The appearance is like the best part of Glasgow. Their meat, vegetables, and fruit, are superior to (those of) any country I ever was in; and their wines, of which they have great variety, are excellent. Had I been rich enough, I would have purchased some Constantia; but it is very dear, so I must therefore defer for a short period sending a pipe to Burnfoot.

"The inhabitants of the town are a cheerful, good-humoured people—rather too phlegmatic; not so mad as I could wish them, but on the whole make an agreeable society for sober-minded people. The *Dyong-Frows* are some of them very pretty—play on the harpsichord, and *danse bien tolerable*. They appeared more lovely when their decent modest manners* were contrasted with the ridiculous extravagance, both in dress and manners, of some young ladies escaped from a London seminary on their flight to India, to lead the fashions there, whose behaviour made *me* blush for them. I was at great pains to assure all I was acquainted with that they were very different from the young ladies in general in Great Britain. . . .

"I have got an honorable, but troublesome, employment in recruiting men out of the prisoners of war for the service of the Company in India. A set of finer fellows I never knew—all Germans. I have been very successful. I have hitherto acted together with Lieutenant Owen from Bengal; but as he sails to-morrow, the whole business falls on my shoulders. I expect in a month to have upwards of 200 for Madras. Nearly 300 are already embarked for Bombay and Bengal."

* Lady Andrew Barnard, who went to the Cape with Lord Macartney two years afterwards, gave a very unfavorable account of the decency and modesty of the young ladies of the Cape. Whatever their manners may have been, it seems that their morals were execrable.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STAFF AT MADRAS.

[1796—1798.]

APPOINTMENT TO THE STAFF OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—THE MILITARY SECRETARYSHIP—LETTERS TO BURNFOOT—DEPARTURE OF SIR ALURED CLARKE—APPOINTMENT TO THE STAFF OF GENERAL HARRIS—DEPARTURE OF LORD HOBART—THE TOWN-MAJORSHIP OF FORT ST. GEORGE.

On his return to India in the cold season of 1795-96, John Malcolm found himself still a lieutenant. But as Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, he was in a better position than many a much older officer. And how happy and contented he was (in all respects but that of separation from his family), the following hastily-written, but characteristic letters to Burnfoot, plainly declare :

JOHN MALCOLM TO HIS MOTHER.

Madras, Feb. 6, 1796.

My dear Mother,—Although I am told that the ships will not sail for near a fortnight, I shall seize this leisure moment to write to you. I am well, and situated in every respect as I could wish. I am secretary to General Clarke, who is, without exception, one of the best men I ever knew. The employment is of that nature as to leave me hardly one idle moment—all the better you will say; and all the better *I* say. The sight of all of you at home has filled my breast with emulation to be worthy of such relations. Bob will be rewarded for all his trouble in a princely

manner. He is, to a positive certainty, to be nominated Commercial Resident at Vizagapatam, an appointment worth 4000*l.* a year. His prospects now are great, and it is fortunate for all who have claims upon him, for he has a noble heart. In disposition, he resembles more his father than any of the others, as I have often told you—anxious and warm, but only for the moment.

'Tis a serious disappointment to both our not being destined soon to meet, for I have a thousand things to communicate which I never can by letter, though I (should) give him one once a day. . . . .

Ever your affectionate son,

JOHN MALCOLM.

TO HIS SISTER MINA.

Madras, Aug. 6, 1796.

MY DEAR MINNY,— . . . . Experience makes wise. I have determined to surmount all that dread that used to attach to the writing of Europe letters, and though I may now and then honor the seniors of the family with a production, you insignificant folks shall have nothing but hasty, uncorrected effusions. These shall be short, but frequent. My present situation leaves me but little time at my own disposal; but we must be attendant and dependent upon the will of others before we can expect attendance and dependence on our own.

Bob is well, and must soon be a man of affluent fortune. Jack is on the road to preferment, but not of a lucrative nature. If he has good luck, he will be able to show hundreds for Bob's thousands, ten years hence. Fortune was pictured blind, but she was clear-sighted when she made your elder brother one of her favorites. He has not a thought of the value of money but as it enables him to indulge the dictates of his noble disposition. I would give the world for a month's leisure to go and see him. . . . .

I have hardly wrote a line of poetry since I left you. My time is so completely engaged, and it is, perhaps, one of the most idle amusements in the world. Should (which is very probable) my next situation give me more employment than this, I will commence encore, and sing you all to sleep. . . . . Stephy mentions a long letter from you, in which you give a description of a Miss Coates and a Miss Munro. The latter I have seen. Her

brother Tom* is a constant correspondent of mine. He is an uncommon clever fellow.

Ever yours most affectionately,

J. M.

At this time Sir John Shore was Governor-General of India. Lord Hobart was Governor of Madras. And Sir R. Abercromby was Commander-in-Chief of Bengal. In the beginning of 1797, the last-named officer resigned his command, and Sir Alured Clarke stood appointed to succeed him. The vacancy thus created at Madras was filled by the appointment of General Harris, who was then at Calcutta, to the command of the Coast army. Early in the month of March, 1797, Sir Alured Clarke sailed for Bengal; and General Harris, on assuming the duties of his new office, appointed his predecessor's military secretary to the same situation on his own staff.

There were circumstances, with the precise nature of which I am not acquainted, to place it out of the power of Sir Alured Clarke to appoint Malcolm his military secretary at the Chief Presidency.† But, attached as the

* The late Sir Thomas Munro.

† The appointment of Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief of Bengal was, in those days of splendid contracts and munificent jobs, a most lucrative one. The following extract from a letter written to Malcolm by a friend at Lucknow exhibits, in a very amusing manner, the perquisites of office:

"At the same time that I shall be disappointed in not seeing you in Bengal, I am very glad that it will be owing to your having secured a comfortable and advantageous situation at Madras. In your readiness to sacrifice a splendid prospect to secure a moderate advantage, you have shown your good sense; but it is possible you may not be aware of all the advantages which belong to the Secretary of the Commander-in-Chief in Bengal. You would receive from 800 to 1000 rupees per month for pay, batta, and house-rent, as Secretary; and you would have the management of the military dawk without the provinces, which is worth 2500 to 3000 per month. The allowance for laying the dawk is 2700 rupees, and the expense does not exceed 400, which is more than defrayed by the postage of letters. Taking your advantages at 3500 rupees, and supposing General Clarke will remain three years in Bengal, I cannot help thinking it would be much to your advantage to come round with him. You would be able to save a lakh of rupees; nor, after having fulfilled the respectable situation of Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, would you find any difficulty in obtaining an appointment at Madras of equal value with your present one whenever you chose to return to that establish-

latter was to his old master,* he found his new position as secretary to General Harris an agreeable one; and his letters, whilst a member of that excellent man's family, are full of cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirit. "You, with all the rest," he wrote to one of his sisters on the 15th of March, 1797, "will be rejoiced at my good fortune, the particulars of which I have wrote to my father. Pulteny is ordered to Bengal, which, though it disappoints my expectation of seeing him soon, I am happy at, as it affords him an opportunity of refreshing his crew, who are mostly ill of the scurvy; and he has already seen his elder brother. The family I am now in is an uncommon pleasant one. The General appears everything that is honest and worthy—Madame, an amiable, good woman; and Mademoiselle, sensible, pleasing, and unaffected. This is a sketch on a very short acquaintance. I promise that you shall become acquainted with them as fast as I do. . . . . General Clarke left us on the 6th instant. I never felt more than in parting with him. His attention to me was excessive; and I

ment."—[*Mr. George Johnstone, Lucknow, to Lieut. John Malcolm; October 26, 1796.*]

From the date of this letter, it would appear that Malcolm had secured the succession to the military secretaryship at Madras as far back as the autumn of 1796. But Mr. Lushington, in his Life of Lord Harris, says that "in the month of January, 1797, he (Harris) received at Calcutta the unexpected intelligence of his appointment to command the army of Madras." This seeming discrepancy must be accounted for on the hypothesis, either that the allusion in Mr. Johnstone's letter is to the Town-Majorship of Madras, the reversion of which may have been secured to him by Lord Hobart; or that the gift of the Military Secretaryship was in the hands of the Governor, and had been promised by him to John Malcolm. Mr. Lushington, indeed, tells us that Lord Harris, "after a short experience of his position in the Council of Madras, felt that the military patronage was so entirely in the hands of the Civil Government, as to be detrimental to the public service." This would appear to be the true solution of the difficulty.

* The attachment was reciprocal. Sir Alured, soon after his departure, wrote to Malcolm, saying, "Lord Hobart, I hope, will continue his friendly attention to you. Mine you may always rely upon. For, to be sincere, long acquaintance has satisfied me that the rectitude of your head and heart entitle you to expect and receive from me all those good offices which the partiality of your other friends wished me to show you when we first met."

have every reason to believe that he was as sorry to leave me as I was to stay. He condescended to tell me the circumstances which placed it out of his power to make my situation in Bengal equal to what it was in Madras; and in a point where my interest was the chief thing consulted, attending him was out of the question. I sincerely hope that he will return, as I have good reason to think it will be seriously for my advantage; and I am sure he is a man who, from his just and dispassionate character, is peculiarly fitted to shine in a high civil station. . . . . I keep my health uncommonly well —rather inclined to get too stout. However, the constant exercise I use will prevent that, in some degree. . . . . I am not fond of going out visiting at night. The truth is, I get sleepy. I fear that this is a symptom of age. To-night I am on duty, having the honor of attending Mrs. and Miss Harris to return about a dozen visits. I wish it were over. . . . . You know I can be the most serious man on earth when I assume that character. I have not found that necessary for more than five hours of my life, and I hope that I may laugh through the remainder as happily. Laughing or crying, I always am your affectionate brother."

It may be gathered from his letters that John Malcolm was never more in a "laughing" mood than at this period of his life. He had good health, good spirits, and good prospects. He was still "Boy Malcolm;" and he wrote both to his friends in India and to dear old Burnfoot in a strain which must have imparted something of its own cheerfulness to the recipients of his laughing epistles. A young officer on the staff of a governor or commander-in-chief leads a careless, though not an idle life. He is in the midst of public affairs, but he is scarcely *of* them. He sees history, but does not act it. He has all the excitement, but none of the responsibilities of greatness.

He shares the pomp, but not the troubles of office. John Malcolm at this time saw little of diplomacy, except its ceremonials; and at these he could afford to laugh. The following letters—the first of which relates to a grand public interview between the Governor of Madras and the Nabob of the Carnatic*—are significant of the elasticity and sunny-heartedness of the writer at this time:

JOHN MALCOLM TO COLONEL CLIFFE.

Madras, April 7, 1797.

MY DEAR CLIFFE,—It is some time since I wrote to you, and had matters gone on without any extraordinaries, I should have been silent longer—but we have had this morning a grand ceremony. To do it justice by description exceeds my ability; but I will attempt to give you an idea of it.

At nine o'clock, all Company's servants assembled in the Governor's house in the Fort, and at ten the procession set out for the Nabob's. Josiah Webbe, Esq., the Grand Secretary, went first in a palanquin. He bore on his knees a silver salver, curiously carved, on which lay a gold-embroidered purse that contained the important letter from the Company to the Nabob. It was followed by a party of troopers, who preceded the Right Honorable Lord Baron Hobart, who rode in a state-coach, attended by aides-de-camp Beresford and Burroughs; after which, in a chariot, came Lieutenant-General Harris, accompanied by Major Gardiner; next Colonel John Richardson, in a bandy, with an ornamented hood; and after him Captains Young and Malcolm, in a neat Calcutta buggy. Mr. Councillor Saunders and Postmaster-General Rowley followed in a post-chaise. Colonel Close, Adjutant-General of the Army, in a palanquin, covered the left flank of the select line; Mr. Private-Secretary Adderley the right; whilst their rear was protected by the body-guard, under Lieutenant Montgomery, whose gallant appearance and active

* Oomdut-ool-Omrah. His predecessor, Mahomet Ali, died in 1795. But communication in Europe was tardy in those days; and it was not until the spring of 1797 that the customary congratulations of the Home Government on the accession of the new Prince reached Madras.

exertions on this occasion it would be unpardonable to pass in silence.

Various ambitious characters attempted to gain the head of his guard and crowd on the first line—but in vain. He wheeled and charged in every direction to oppose their progress, whilst his bright sword divided the air, and lightning flashed from his eyes. His words, like his actions, denoted the fury of his soul. His enemies fled before him. Two only dared to tempt his rage. The first was the great Westcott, who sate in a sea-colored car, drawn by two fiery duns. He called to his charioteer to lash his impatient coursers. His high mind revolted at remaining so long behind. His faithful charioteer obeyed, and the pride of both mounted for a moment, like the dust they raised, as they flew along. "Stop—nor attempt to move beyond thy present station," pronounced with a voice of authority by one whose half-lifted sabre showed the charter on which he acted, met their astonished ears. The affrighted charioteer pulled his reins; and though the pale, quivering lip of his master showed the anguish of his soul, he fell back silent and confounded.

Not dismayed by his friend's defeat was the portly Ben (Roebuck*), whilst he reclined at length in a painted litter. He ordered his attendants, who at once carried and guarded him, to poise their sharp-pointed pikes (which were adorned with beautiful tassels), and advanced to the foremost ranks. They shouted, and rushed to the war. Their glittering arms and their numbers would have appalled the boldest heart; but they affected not our hero's. He singly charged the phalanx. They were dismayed. Their coward hearts sunk, and the weapons which they had wielded in their pride fell from their nerveless grasp. In vain did their lord encourage and reproach—in vain did he give bitter taunts to the foe. They bore him from the field of danger to a place of safety, grumbling like the shaggy tenant of Siberia's wild when his head is wounded by the arrow of the hunter. The defeat of these heroes deterred all others from a similar fate; and a motley throng, numerous as the stars, followed contented the troop of warriors.

* Mr. Roebuck was an alderman of the Mayor's Court, and father of the present member for Sheffield.

I have mounted and rode very hard, and am only arrived at the Nabob's outer gate. Perhaps I may take another spurt at the close; but at present, with your leave, Colonel, I will walk, which, indeed, most parties did, to the palace. We passed through a street of troops, who presented their arms to this wonderful letter as it was carried near them. When at the inner gate, the Nabob advanced to meet the Governor, who briefly explained the purport of his visit. We followed the great men into the *dewan-khana*, or hall of audience, in the centre of which was a small carpet with silken cushions, covered by a golden canopy, supported by painted pillars, and hung round with blue lustres. Under this his Highness led the Lord; and, whilst Generals, Counsellors, and other distinguished personages pressed near, Mr. Secretary Webbe read the honored letter in a clear and audible tone.

You, no doubt, recollect the *Vicar of Wakefield*. If you do, you are acquainted with most of this letter. The company begin, like Miss Wilhelmina Carolina Skeggs, expressing their sorrow at his Highness's father's death, and then they express their joy on his ascending the *Musnud*; and then they express their approval of the advice given, and the offers made of a modification of the treaty of '92 by Lord Hobart; and then they express their disappointment at the Nabob's refusing them. They have, they say, given the Lord orders to open another negotiation, and they beg the Nabob will listen to him. If he does, he will make them a happy Company, and essentially benefit himself. If he does not, it will be an unfavorable commencement of his reign, and may affect materially their future conduct towards him. In all these sentiments they declare that they are joined by his Majesty's Ministers—"given under our great seal at Leadenhall-street."

All was now over, and each sought his home. I had forgot to mention that there were two or three salutes and some volleys of musketry on the occasion. . . . .

A man who sits down to write a letter about nothing must waste ink, pens, and paper; and try the patience of his friends. 'Tis a true remark, and happily exemplified by

Yours sincerely,

J. MALCOLM.

JOHN MALCOLM TO HIS SISTER AGNES.*

Madras, Oct. 16, 1797.

MY DEAR NANCY,—I am tired of writing politics and nonsense—of forming ingenious premises, and drawing therefrom most wise conclusions. Such being my state, what is the remedy? Can there be a better than scrawling a Europe letter to a nice, light-hearted sister, whose eyes are keen enough to unravel my hieroglyphics, and whose heart is good enough to excuse my errors?—"None better." I will swallow the draught this moment, though it is near ten o'clock; and I am mistaken if I have not a good night's rest after it.

It is, my dear Nancy, one of those still clear nights, which your friend Mrs. Radcliffe would dwell on for many pages. I wish that admirable young woman were here. I would lead her a walk which would equal one of her journeys in the *Mysteries of Udolpho.*

Do you remember, when we were all young, sitting round the parlour fire at Burnfoot? You were reading the most dreadful of the castle-scenes. All was hushed attention. My father leant with his head gently resting on the cornice of the chimney-piece, while it also received additional support from the two forefingers of his right hand. Yes—I can never forget his position. At this moment, a light tread, like that of a human foot, was heard in the winding dark passage which leads from the kitchen to the parlour. It drew little attention. The sweet, mellow tone of your voice, the awfulness of the subject, were too attractive;—but it far exceeds the humble power of my pen to tell how we were roused from this delightful state.

A rumbling noise was heard at the door: all looked round in amaze. The pages you had perused were imprinted on our memory—the supernatural scenes they represented were present to our imagination. The parlour door burst open—ten thousand small black devils flew into the room: they were impelled in every direction by a fury in the shape of a woman. All was confusion: some shrieked; others tried to gain the windows. My father, after oversetting two chairs in attempting to retreat, ventured to look round. He saw what we then all began to discover

* Agnes Malcolm died at Irvine, April, 1836, aged 73.

—that our alarm was caused by the pretty Peggy M'Neill, whose foot had slipped at the parlour-door, which she wished to open to bring in a basket of coals to rekindle our almost extinct fire.

"This is the consequence, girls," said my father, pretty quickly —"this is the consequence of your novels and romances. The mind is destroyed: fancy takes complete possession; and you see what a piece of work she makes. Why, I was almost alarmed myself. It required all the firmness I possess to prevent mistaking Peggy M'Neill, that honest lass there, for Hecate, and the coals for her attendant devils.

"This is all you, Nancy," he continued; "you persuade your uncle to send you down all the trash from London, and then prevail on us to listen. Lay it aside—lay it aside; and get John to read us a few pages of 'Reid on the Intellectual Powers.' He has lately perused it, and will tell you what a noble work it is for confirming the judgment, and making the mind firm in her principles."

"Indeed" (you said), "father, but I'll do no such thing as leave off this nice book for any nonsense about Philosophy. As for John and his firm principles, his mind is wonderfully prepared by these fine books, to be sure. He showed more of his bodily than his intellectual powers when he almost killed me by jumping from the chair to the window, frightened at a basket of coals." After this sally, Nancy, you began again. The fire grew more bright. My father went away; but returned in a few minutes, and sate as attentive as the rest to hear the sequel of the *Mysteries of Udolpho.*

"But never mind the night and Mrs. Radcliffe, John. What are you about? Do you keep your health? Have you any fine Behauder* horses, as you used to call them? What do you do in the morning—and what in the evening? Have you any fine ladies at Madras? Do you ever write any odes?"—Patience, and I will answer these questions in regular order.

As to my health, it is as good as you could wish it. I have two fine prancing horses—fellows that beat the air and paw the ground. They are both grey. One of them was born at the source of the Indus, and the other within a few miles of Ispahan,

* Literally, a great lord; means here, *proud, prancing.*

in Persia. I could not wish a wife with a sweeter dispo
they both possess—nor one with more fire and spirit.

I pass my mornings in a way which I trust will
evenings, some time hence, more comfortable.

My evenings at present do not pass unpleasantly—far
I have a most agreeable home; and if disposed to visit,
seldom am, I meet a welcome in families both genteel and

As to ladies—I don't know that we have any positiv
But we have several good mothers, and some promising
ters; and what more would you wish?

When I have an idle hour and wish to keep my eyes c
take up my Hafiz, fire my imagination, and if the fit l
translate an ode. But I seldom get through it. If a stanz
pleases me, or a rhyme won't come, I curse the idle amuse
tear all I have written, throw the pen out of the door, and
reading Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

I, however, succeeded better yesterday. I finished an
which I now enclose. It appears of the wicked order; but th
appearance only—and so you may tell any old Presbyterian wi
that finds fault with it. Its wickedness arises out of her ig
rance. Hafiz was a holy writer. His compositions resemble t
Song of Solomon. Where he mentions the Tavern, he mea
Paradise. The Cup-bearer is the angel Gabriel. His Mistre
is the Almighty; and Wine is Divine Love, &c., &c., &c. Thi
I have been assured of by the wisest men of the East.

When he died in his native town, Shiraz, all the inhabitants
were not convinced of this. Several ignorant, plain men took the
meaning as it was written; and declared its tendency was to pro-
mote luxury and dissipation, and that the author did not deserve
to be interred in sacred ground. Others, confident of its latent
purity, contended that he almost deserved divine honors for the
services he had done to religion by his holy, though mystical, works.
The parties were violent. One endeavoured to convey the corpse
to the burial-ground—the other opposed; and bloodshed ensued.
At last it was determined, by mutual consent, that his own book
should finish the dispute. It was to be opened at random. The
finger of a man blinded was to point to the couplet. If it was, on
reading, found to be of a nature to encourage vice, the friends of
the poet agreed to relinquish their object. If on the contrary,

his remains were to be quietly interred. The appeal is common in the East, and particularly made to the holy Koran by Princes before they undertake any affair of importance.

In the present instance, the scene was highly interesting. The fury of mistaken zealots was likely to debar from its last mournful rites the body of one whose name had given celebrity to their country. All was anxiety. The most learned of the Moulavees held the book, and was appointed to read the couplet which fate decreed to decide the important dispute. The Heaven-directed finger was placed on the two concluding lines of one of his most serious but most beautiful odes:

Withdraw not your steps from the obsequies of Hafiz;
Though he be immersed in sin he will rise into Paradise.

The shout of joy was general. Every one was convinced; and all Shiraz attended his funeral. A superb tomb was built over him; and it is to this day visited by the learned and the pious from all quarters of the globe.

I will write you a grave letter in January.

Your affectionate brother, J. M.

But although at this time Malcolm led a careless and a happy life, it was not an idle one. He had, indeed, an irrepressible desire not only to accumulate information for himself, but also to impart it to others. Ever since he had first made the acquaintance of Sir John Kennaway,* he had longed to take an active part in the

* He continued to correspond with this gentleman, who had finally returned to England. The following extracts from his correspondence belong to this period, and are not without interest:—"I am in the same situation," wrote Malcolm, "as when I wrote you last—Persian interpreter and secretary to General Harris, who is kind and attentive to a degree. With General Clarke I keep up a constant correspondence, and have a pride in thinking I stand high in his esteem. I anxiously look for his succession to this Government, to which he has so long been posted. He makes no promises, and no one knows what he means to do till he has an opportunity of doing it. This I am convinced of, that he has an anxious wish to promote my interests, and will lose no opportunity of doing it."—[*August* 31, 1797.]

And again:—"All my hopes still point to being some day employed in the diplomatic line, which makes me extremely solicitous that my friends at home should lose no opportunity of

great game of diplomacy. He saw, indeed, that there were events then taking shape in the womb of Time, which would render it essential to the interests of the nation that the British-Indian Government should have at its disposal men thoroughly acquainted with the history and constitution of the Native States of India. And seeing this, he set himself resolutely to work, to acquire the desiderated information, by corresponding and conversing with the best-informed men in the country; and to supply the intelligence thus acquired, in the shape of Minutes and Memoirs, to the Government under which he served. The papers upon these important subjects, which he sent in to Lord Hobart, were graciously received. The Governor encouraged him to proceed in the good work of collecting and digesting intelligence; and Malcolm applied himself diligently to it, in the entire confidence that it would, at no very remote date, be found of eminent use in the advancement, not merely of his own interests, but of the welfare also of the State.

At this time Lord Hobart was about to retire from the Government of Madras; and it was believed that Sir Alured Clarke would succeed him. But Sir John Shore was also about to lay down the reins of office; so Sir Alured, as Senior Member of Council in Bengal, stood next for the Governor-Generalship, and in March, 1798, he entered upon its duties. Meanwhile, in the preceding month, Lord Hobart had taken his departure, and been

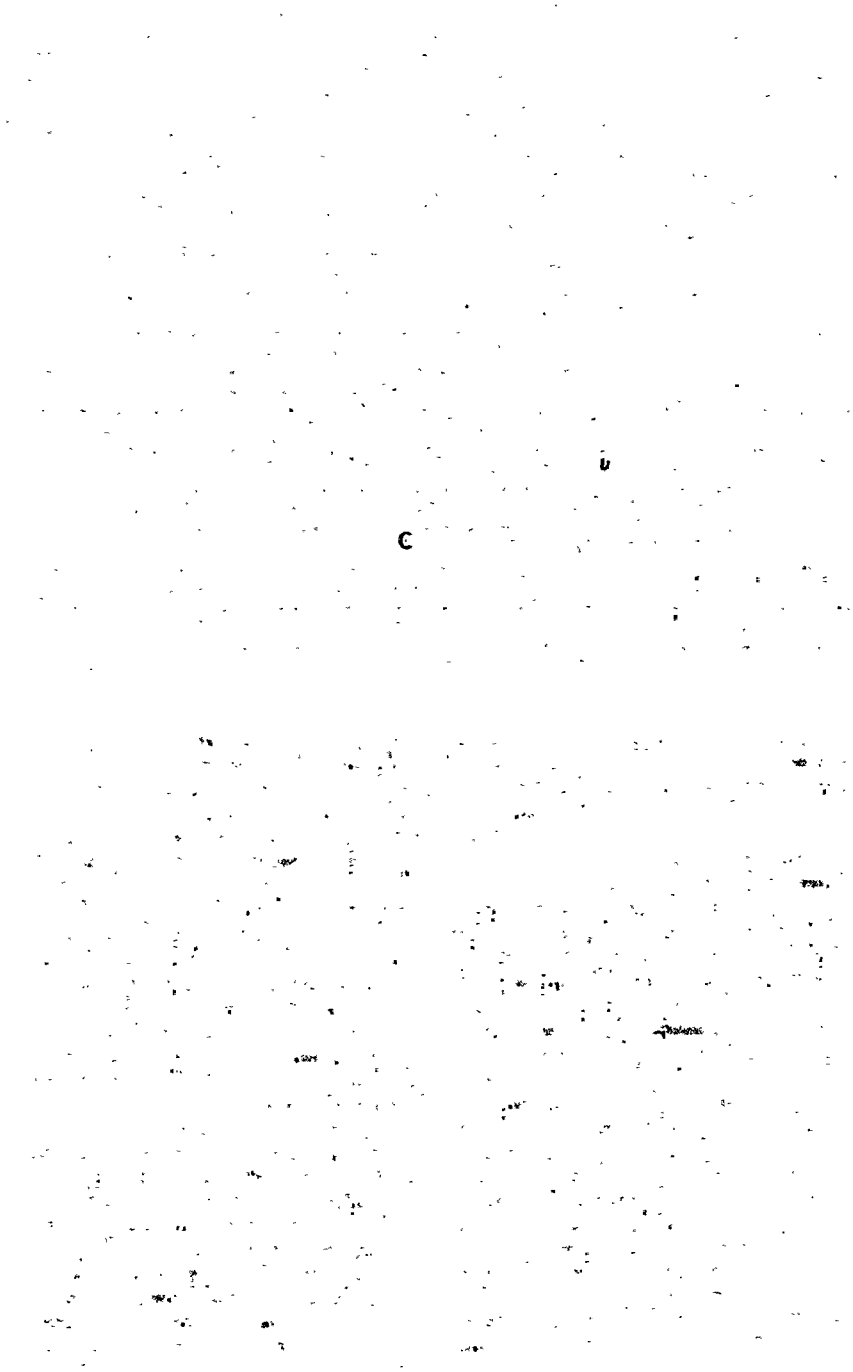
getting me mentioned to great men coming out either to Bengal or Madras. I can promise much arranged information; and the flattering notice of several papers I have given in has encouraged me to persevere in the pursuit. . . . . My health is as confirmed as you could wish it. I live moderately, and take a great deal of exercise. I have left off, with other idle habits, my poetical flights. I do, however, attempt an ode now and then, as you will see by the enclosed, which I translated two days ago to send to my sister. They insist on having nonsense of the kind sent to Burnfoot once or twice a year."—[*October* 16, 1797.]

succeeded, for the time, by General Harris, who was now at the head both of the civil and military affairs of the Coast. The change was beneficial to Malcolm, who was nominated Town-Major of Fort St. George—an office then of far greater honor and emolument than it is at the present time. But it had not the virtue of permanency. The appointment, indeed, was considered as a personal appendage to the Governor of the day, like any other part of the constitution of his "family." As Malcolm only stepped in during an interregnum, his incumbency was therefore more than usually uncertain and precarious.* He held the appointment until the autumn of the same year. Lord Clive, who had been appointed Governor of Madras, arrived at the end of August; and new arrangements were made for the Town-Majorship of the Fort.

To Malcolm this was a matter of but little moment. He had recommended himself ere this to the notice of one higher in office than the Governor of Madras. Lord Clive became in due course one of Malcolm's fastest friends—but no man esteemed his worth or appreciated his services more than did Lord Wellesley.

* Letter of John Malcolm to Lord Hobart—[*March* 25, 1798]—"Sir John Shore left Calcutta on the 8th inst. I fear Sir Alured's reign will be short, as I observe by intelligence which arrived this morning that Lord Mornington sailed on the 8th of November. As I do not find any person is named for Madras, I cherish hopes of being Town-Major a few months longer."

To General Ross, who had been Lord Cornwallis's secretary, he also wrote, soon afterwards—[*May* 15, 1798]—"I cannot lose a moment in thanking you for your attentive kindness in mentioning me to Lord Mornington. Had that nobleman been destined for Madras, your friendly recommendation would probably have caused my remaining in the lucrative situation of Town-Major, which I can hardly expect to be so fortunate as to keep under General Harris's successor; though, if my friends know I fill it before any Governor leaves England, they will naturally on such an occasion exert their interests, as I have made them aware of its consequence. If I remain one year, I shall have a little foundation on which I may erect a goodly castle."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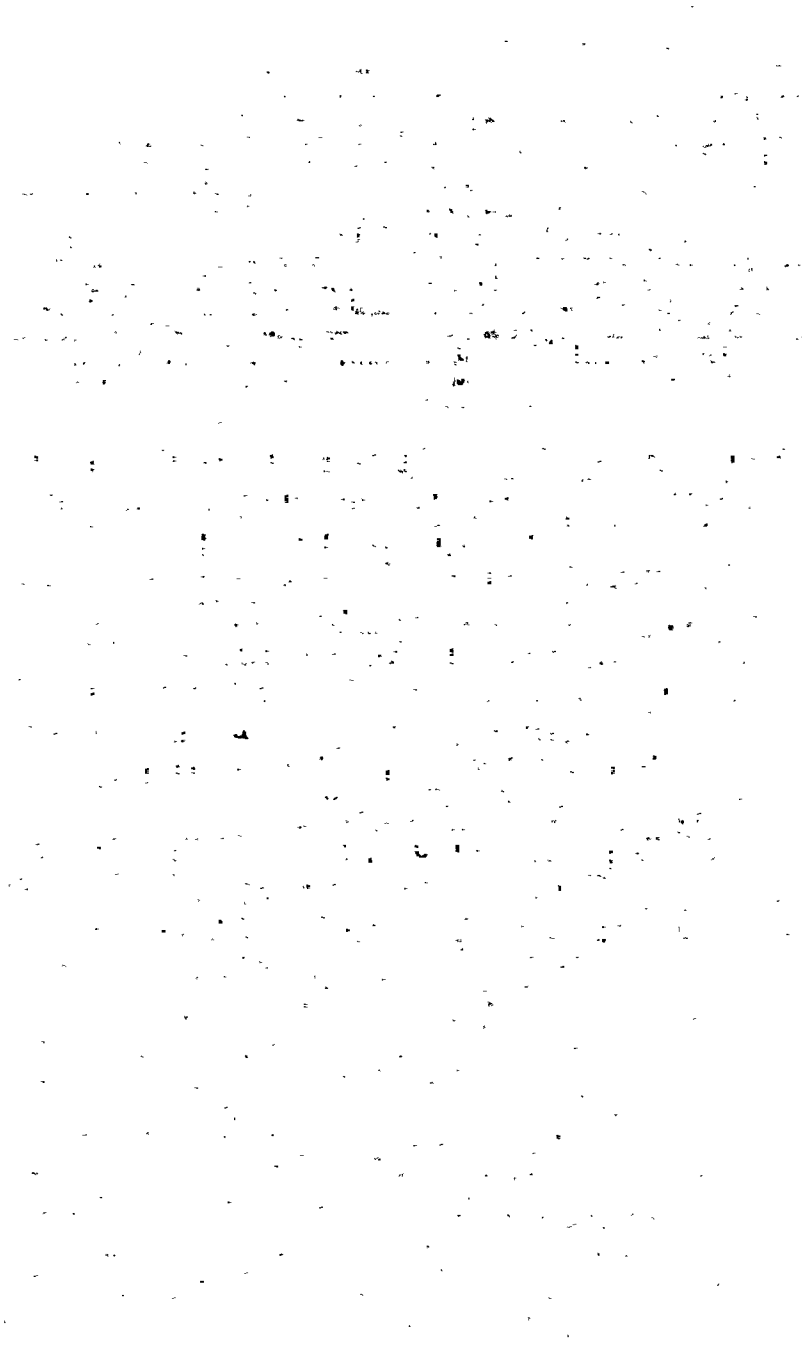

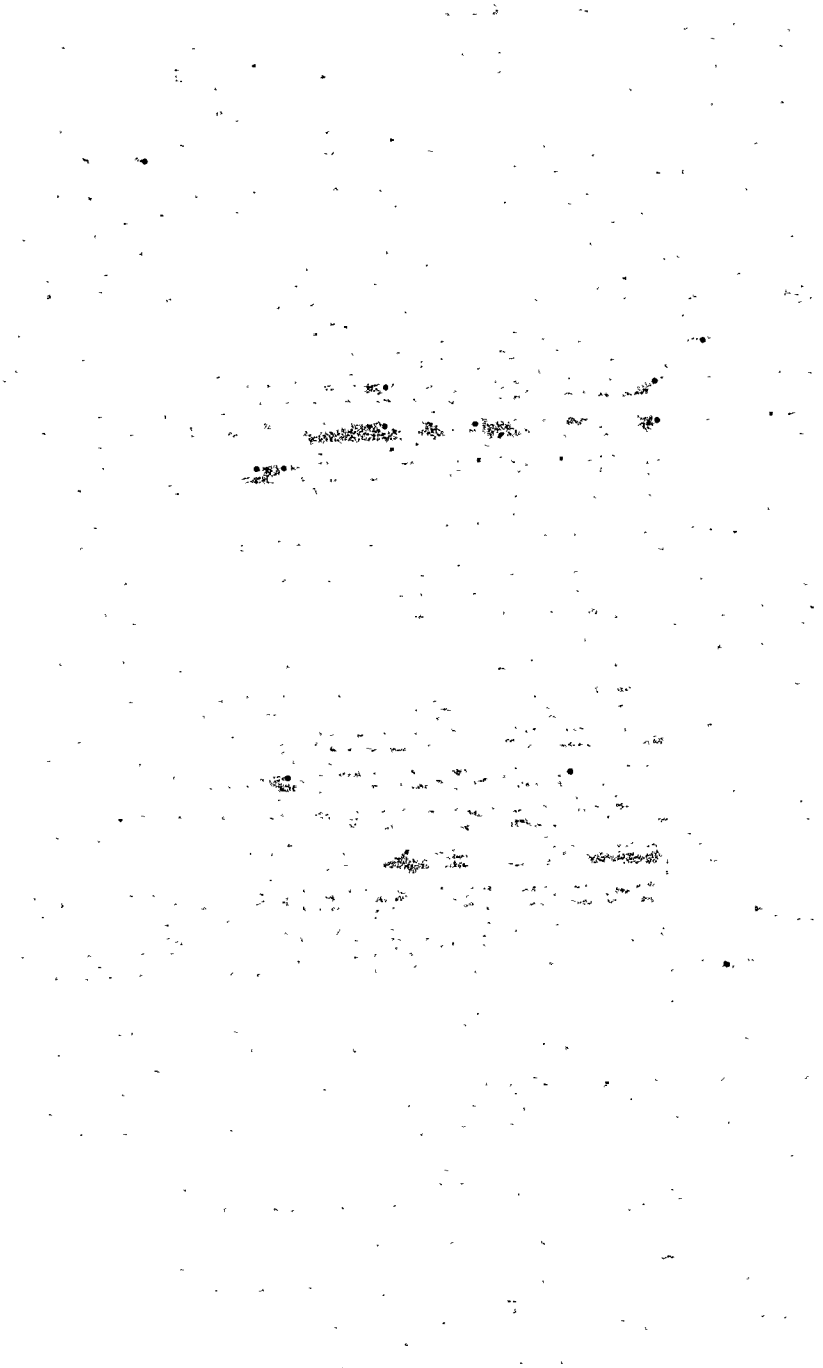

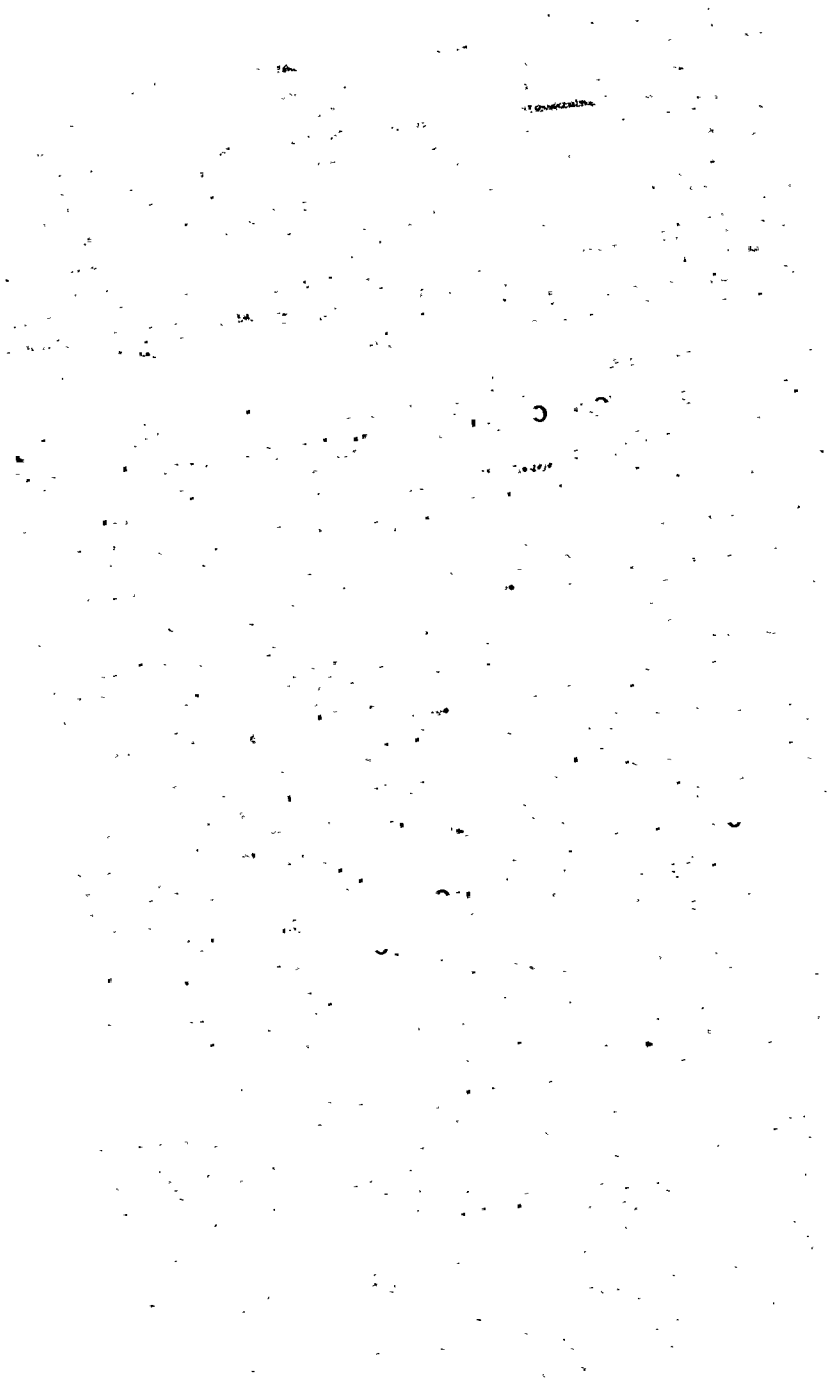

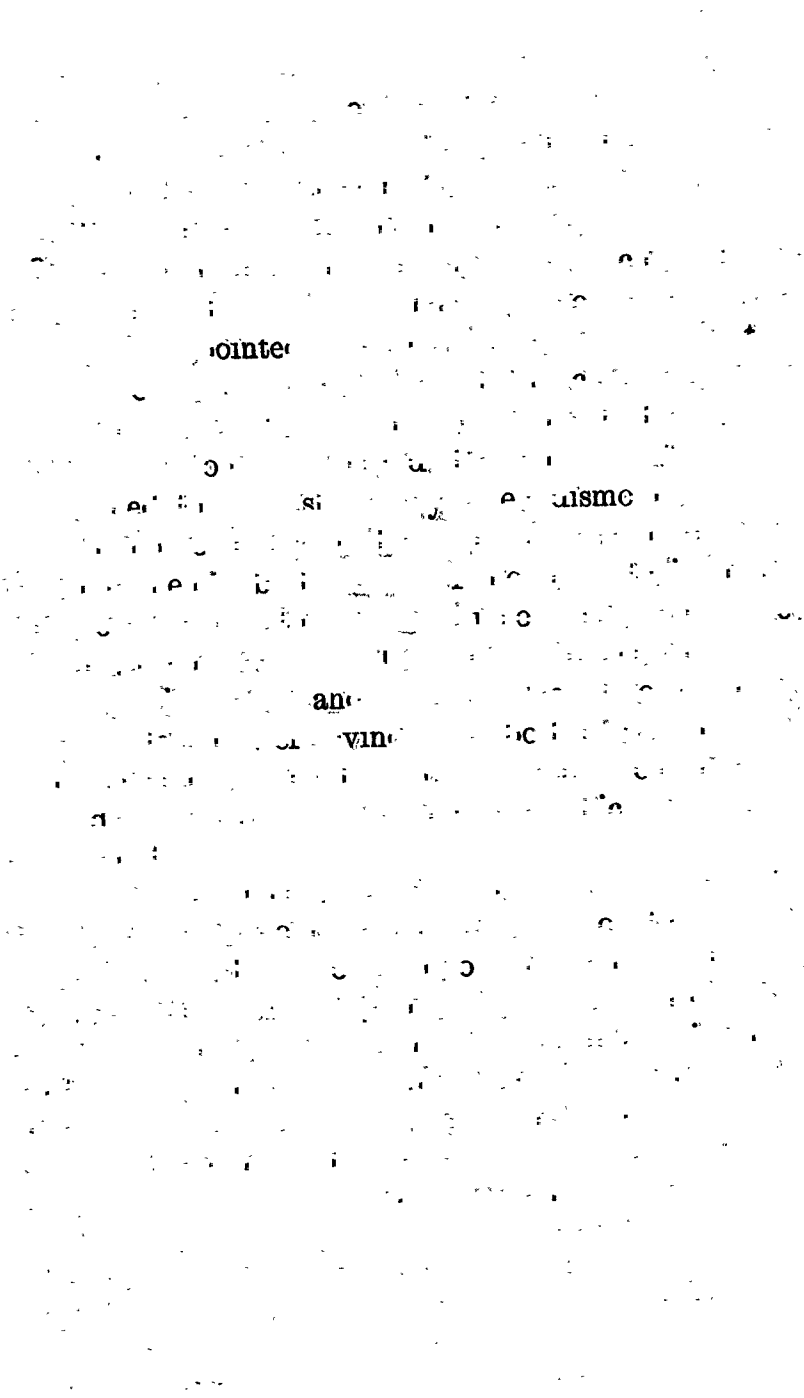

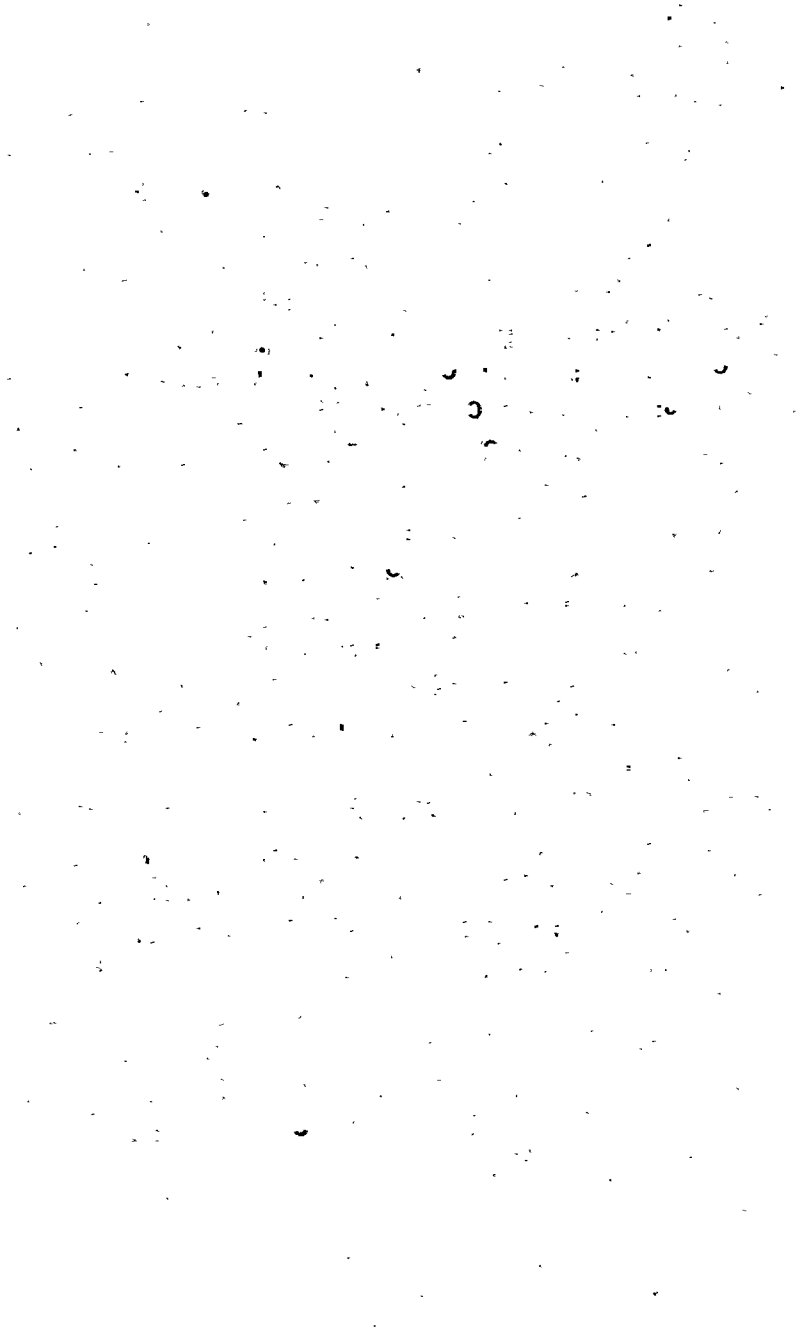

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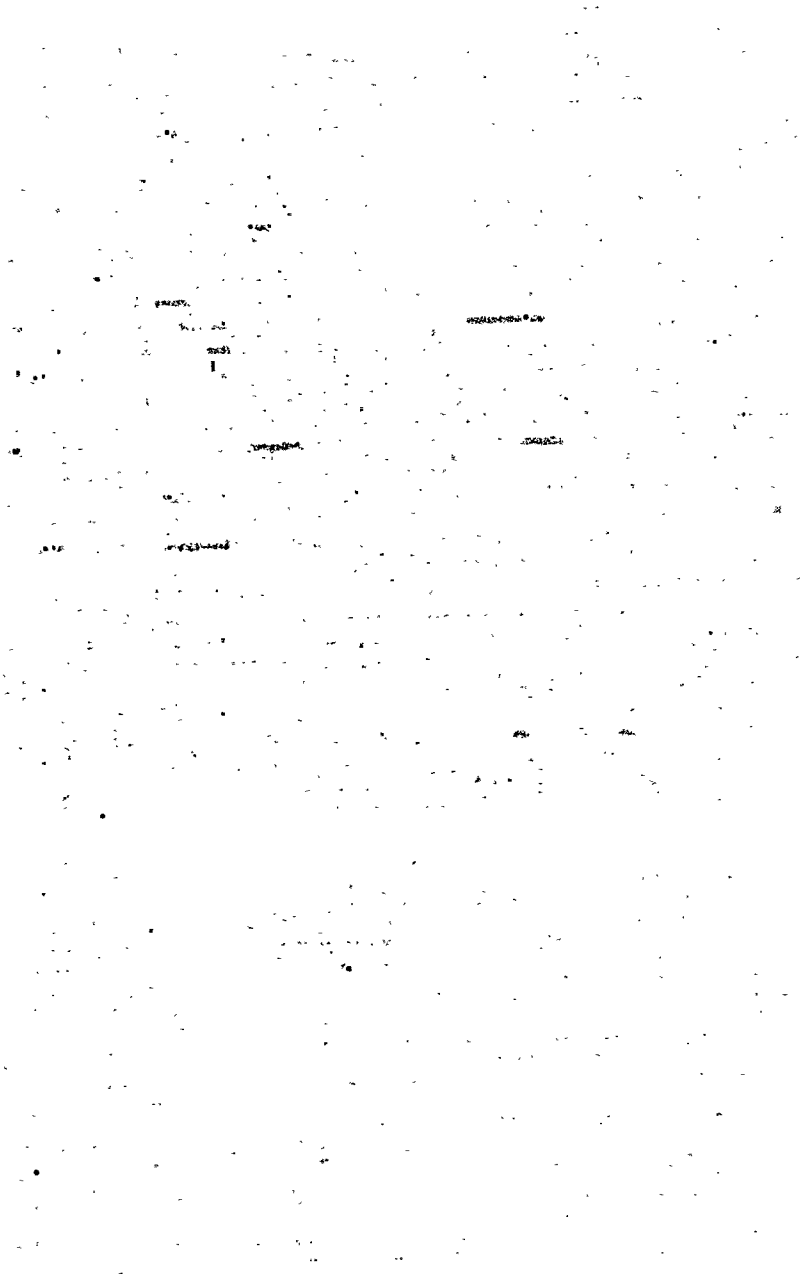

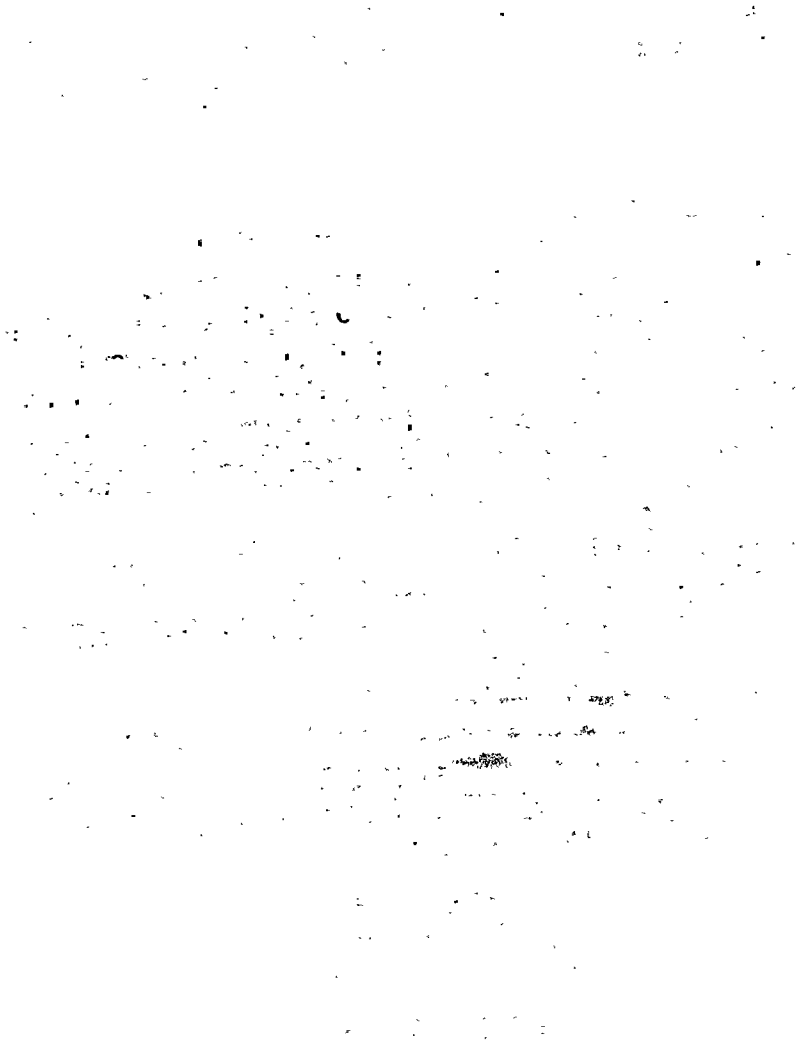

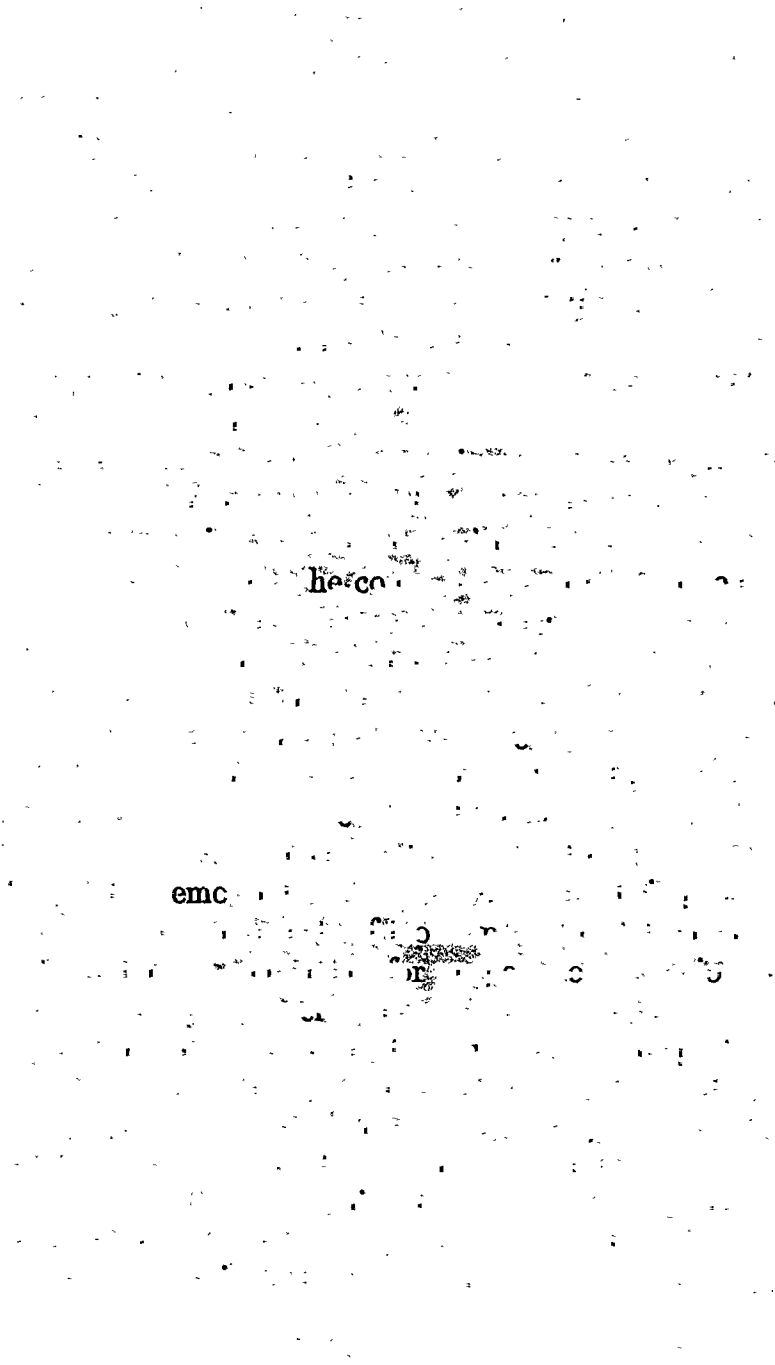

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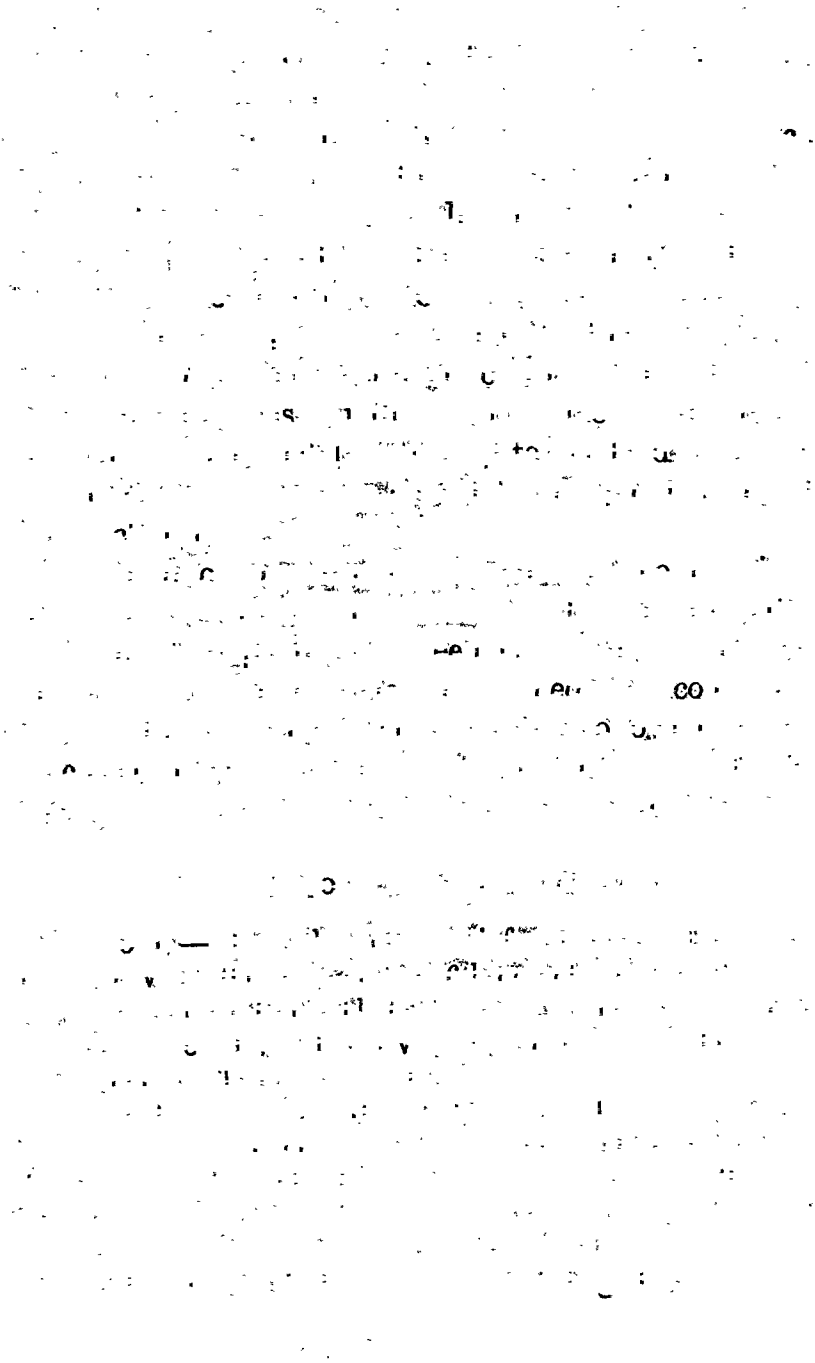

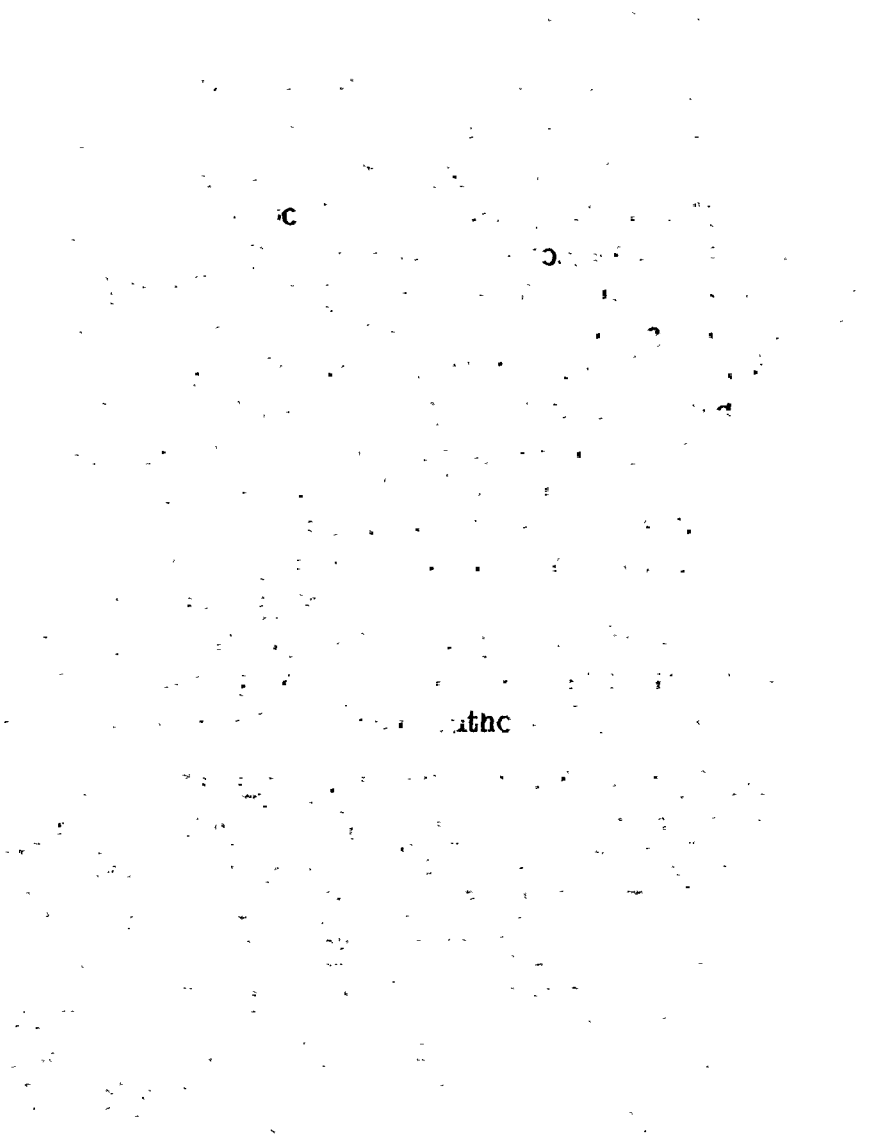

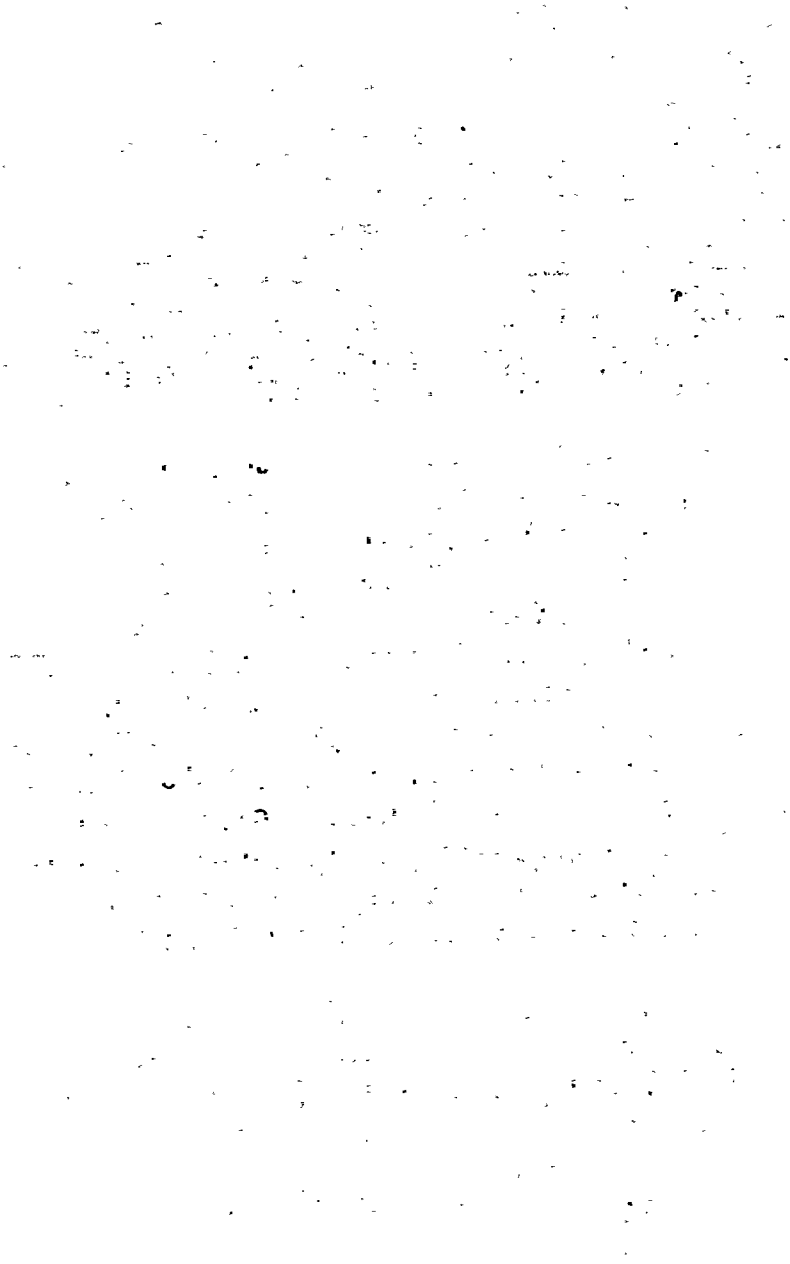

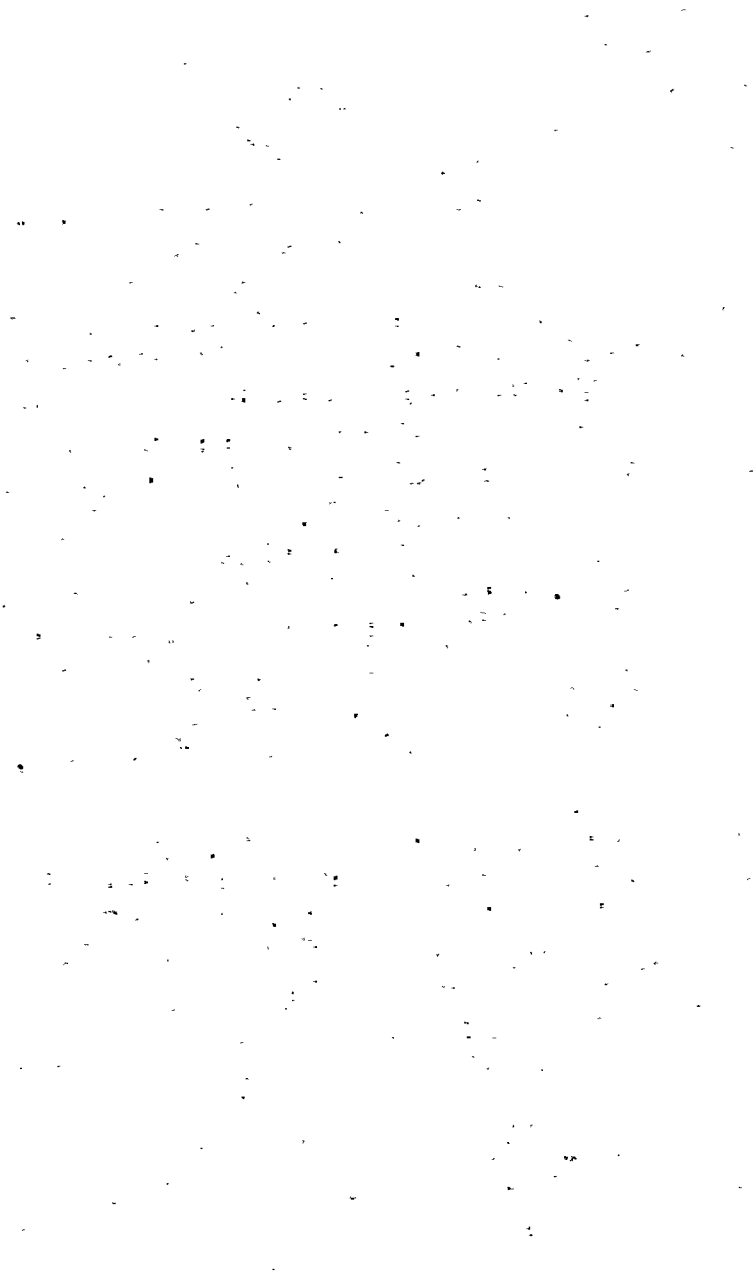

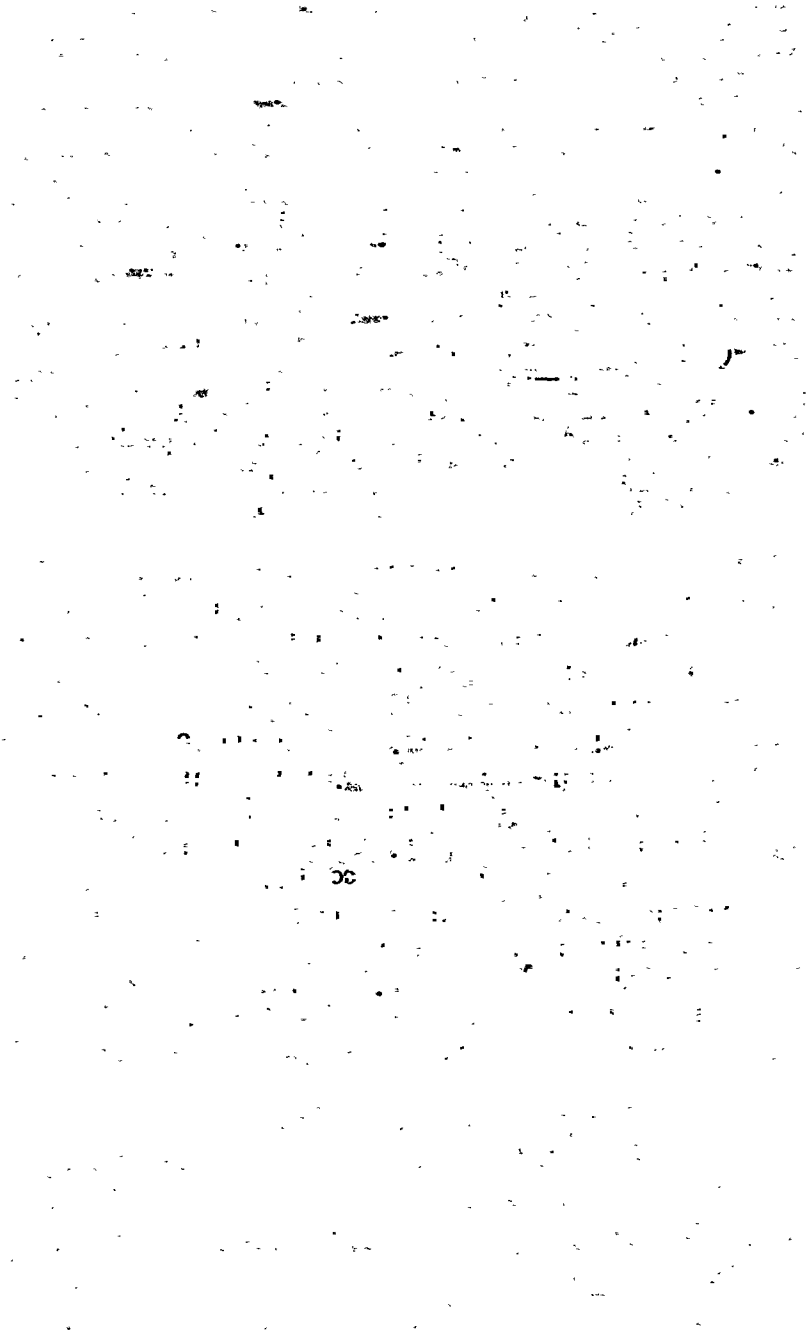

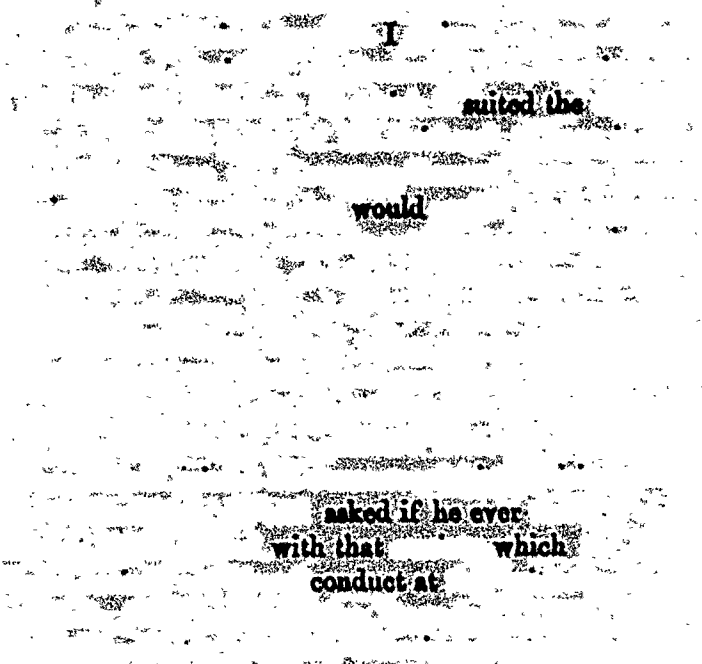
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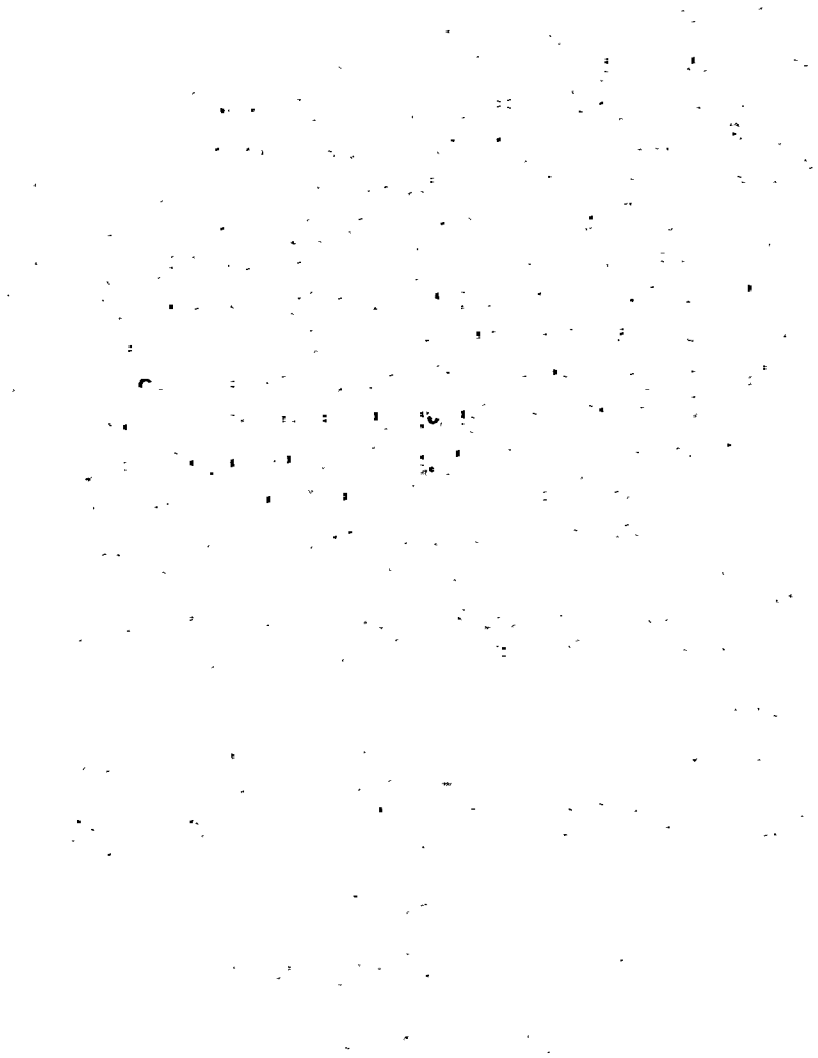

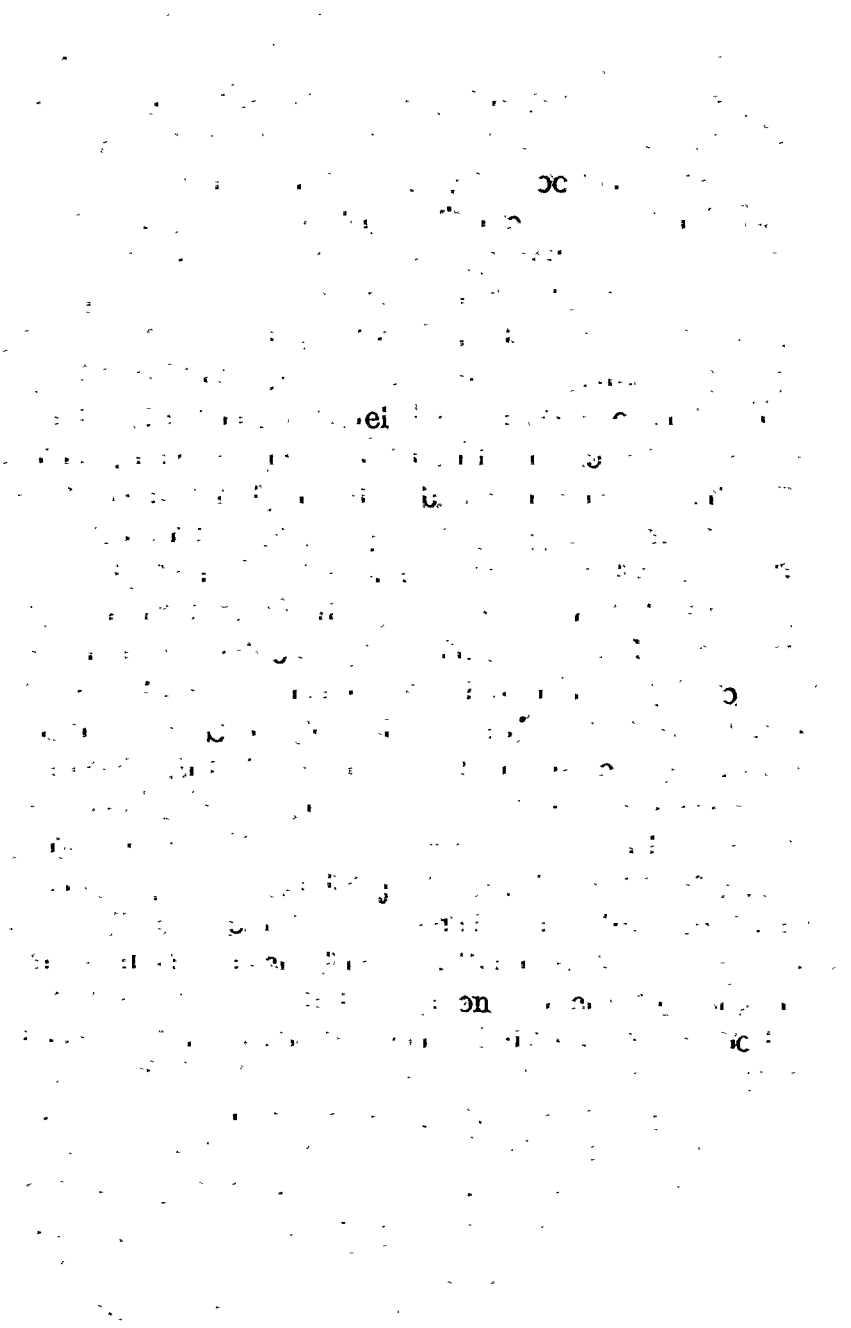

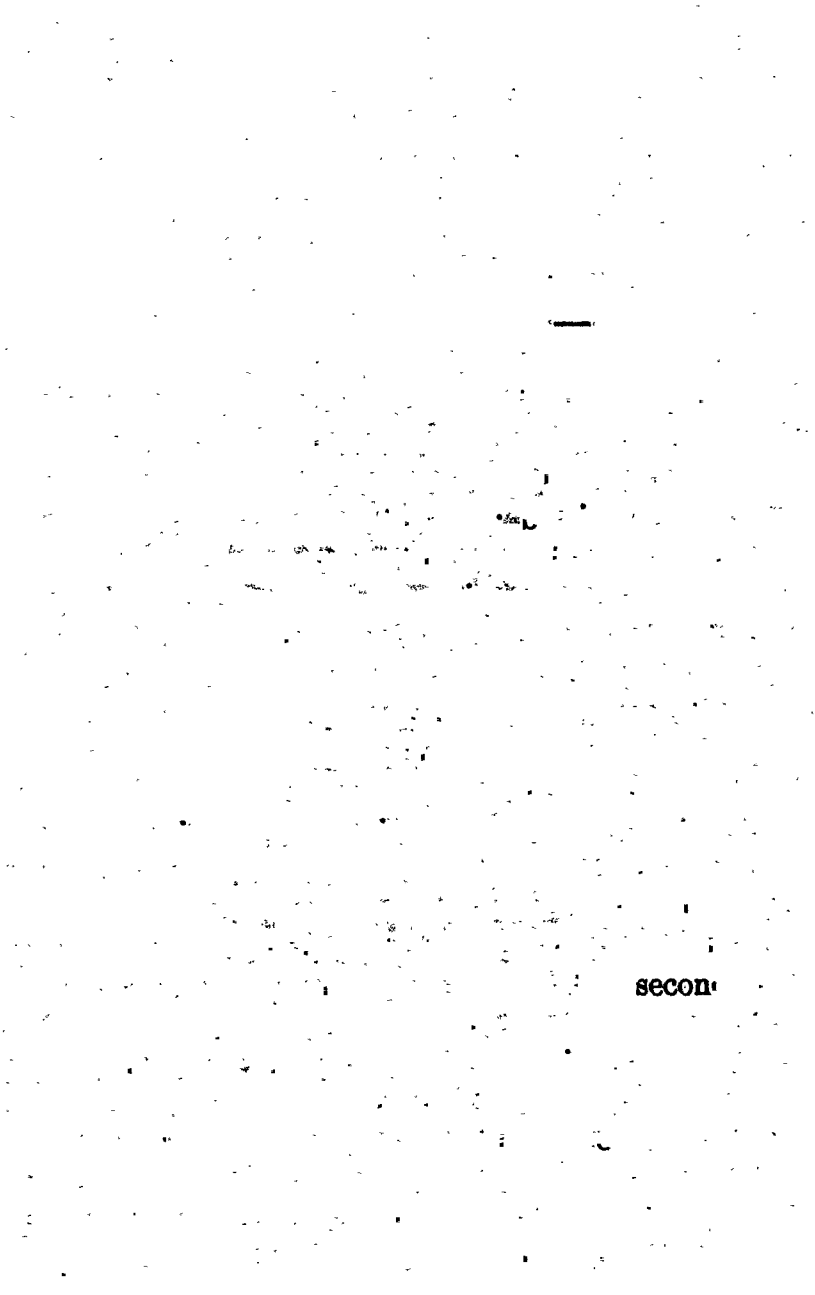
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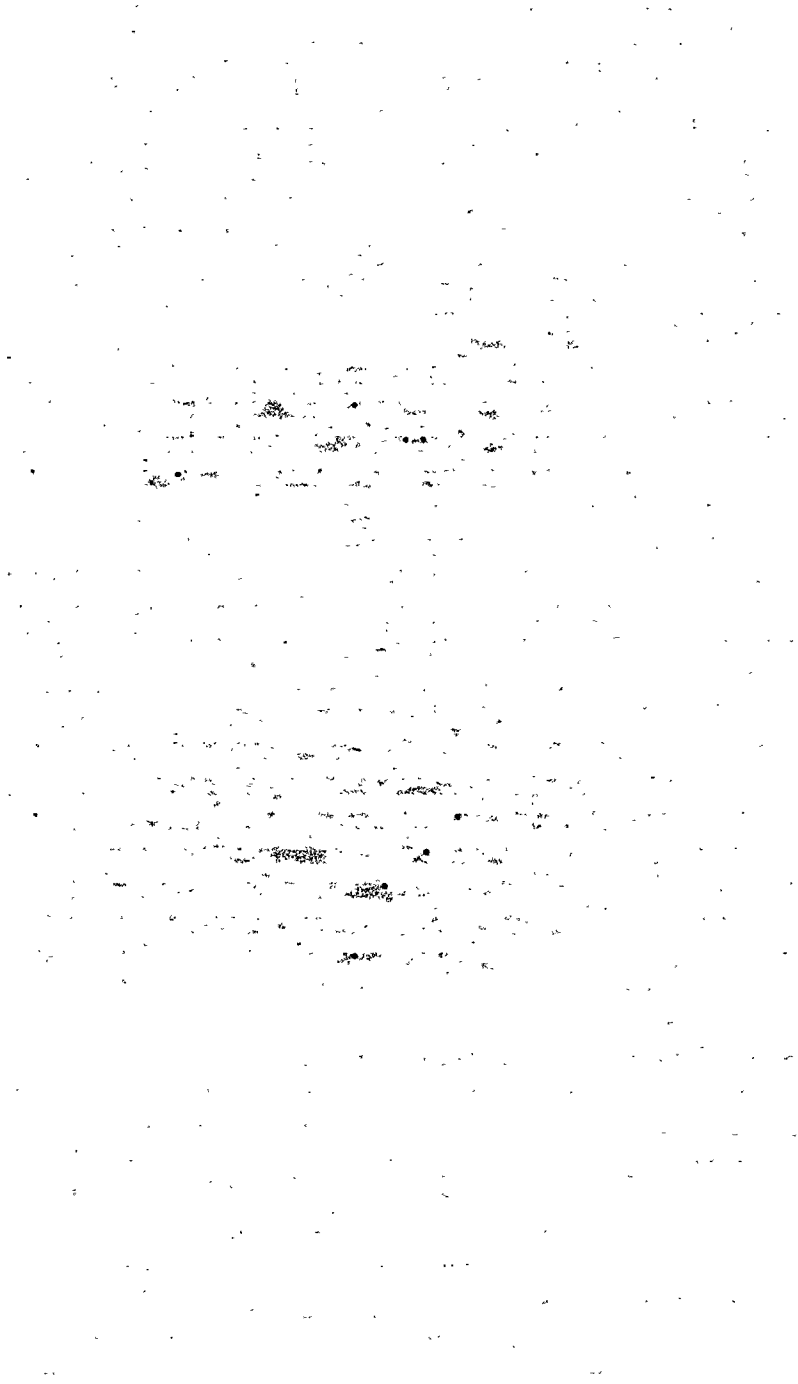

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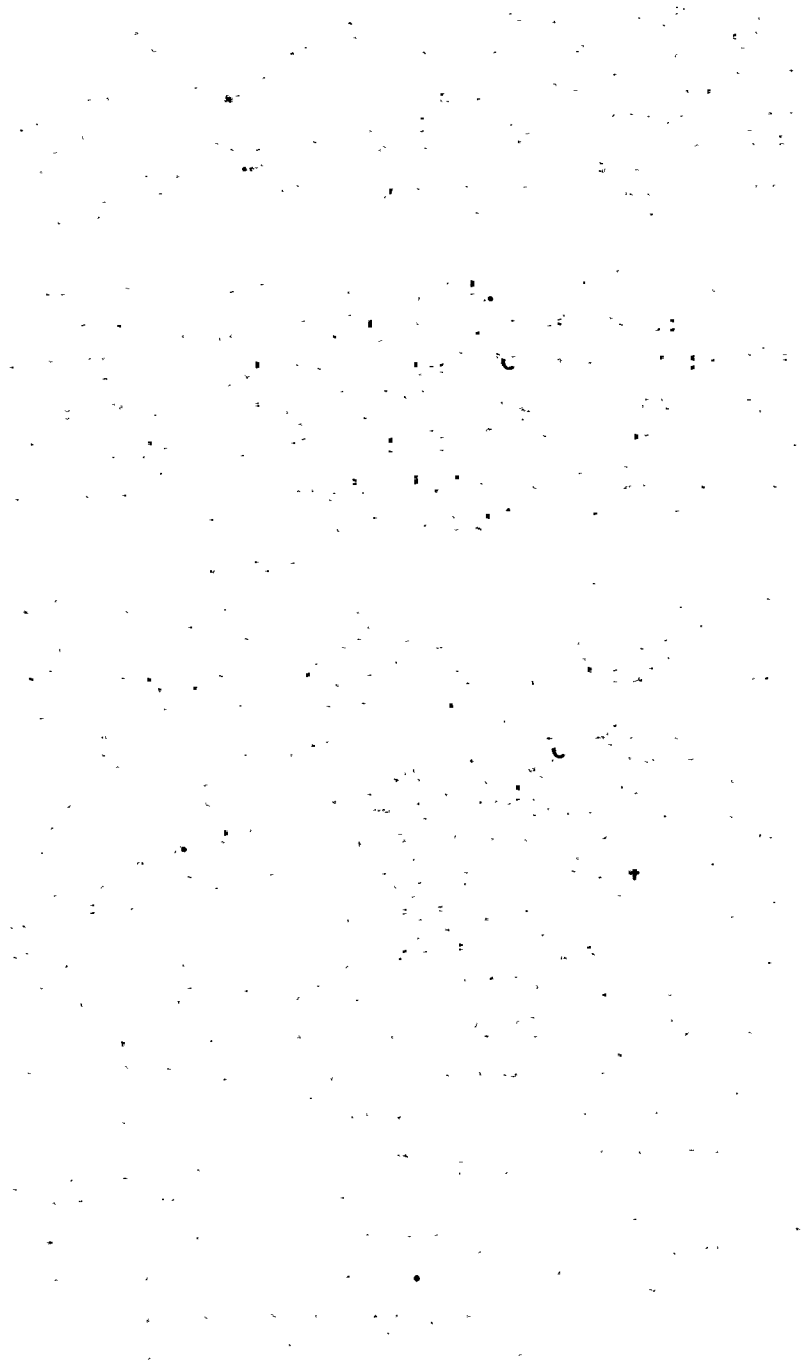

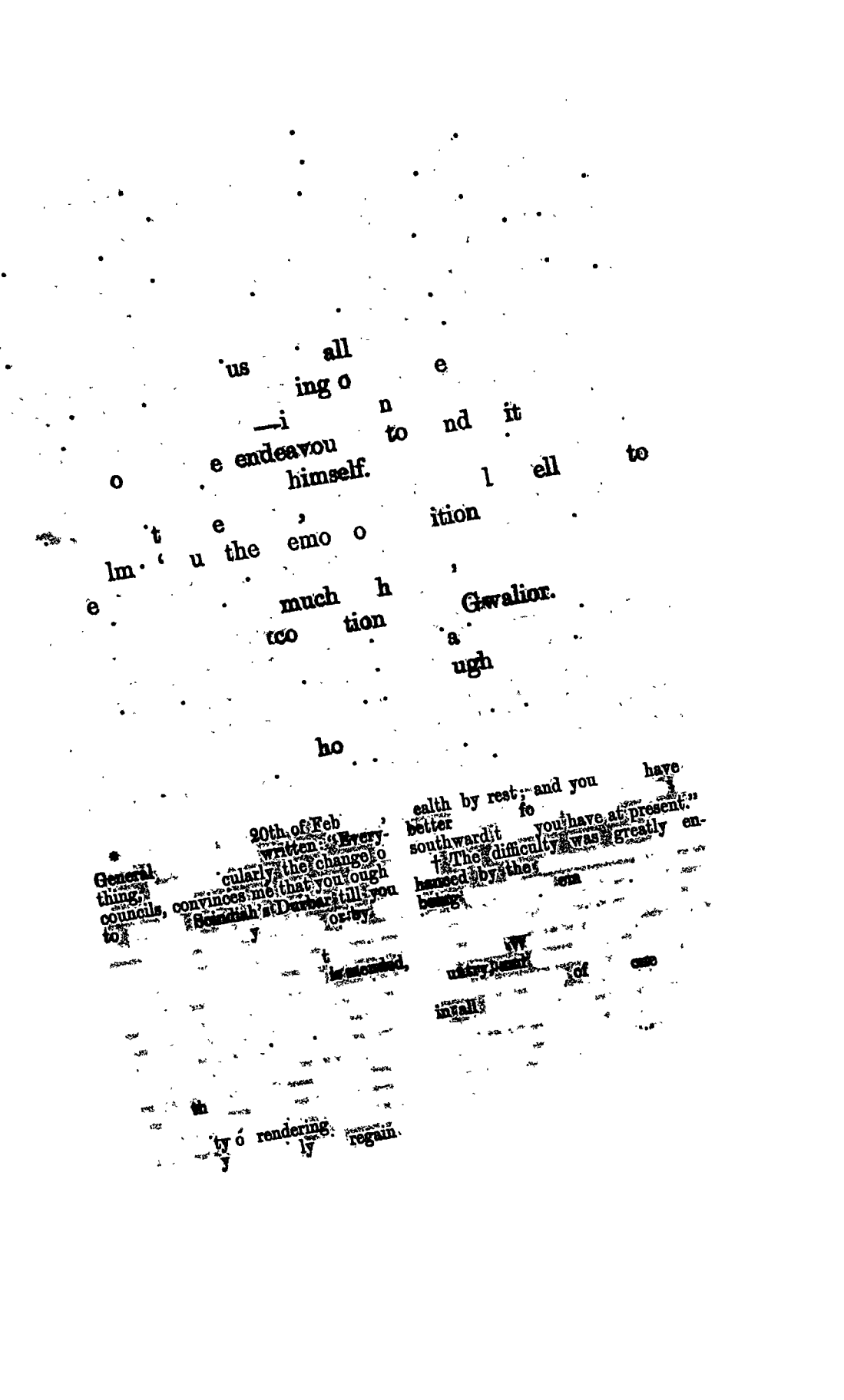

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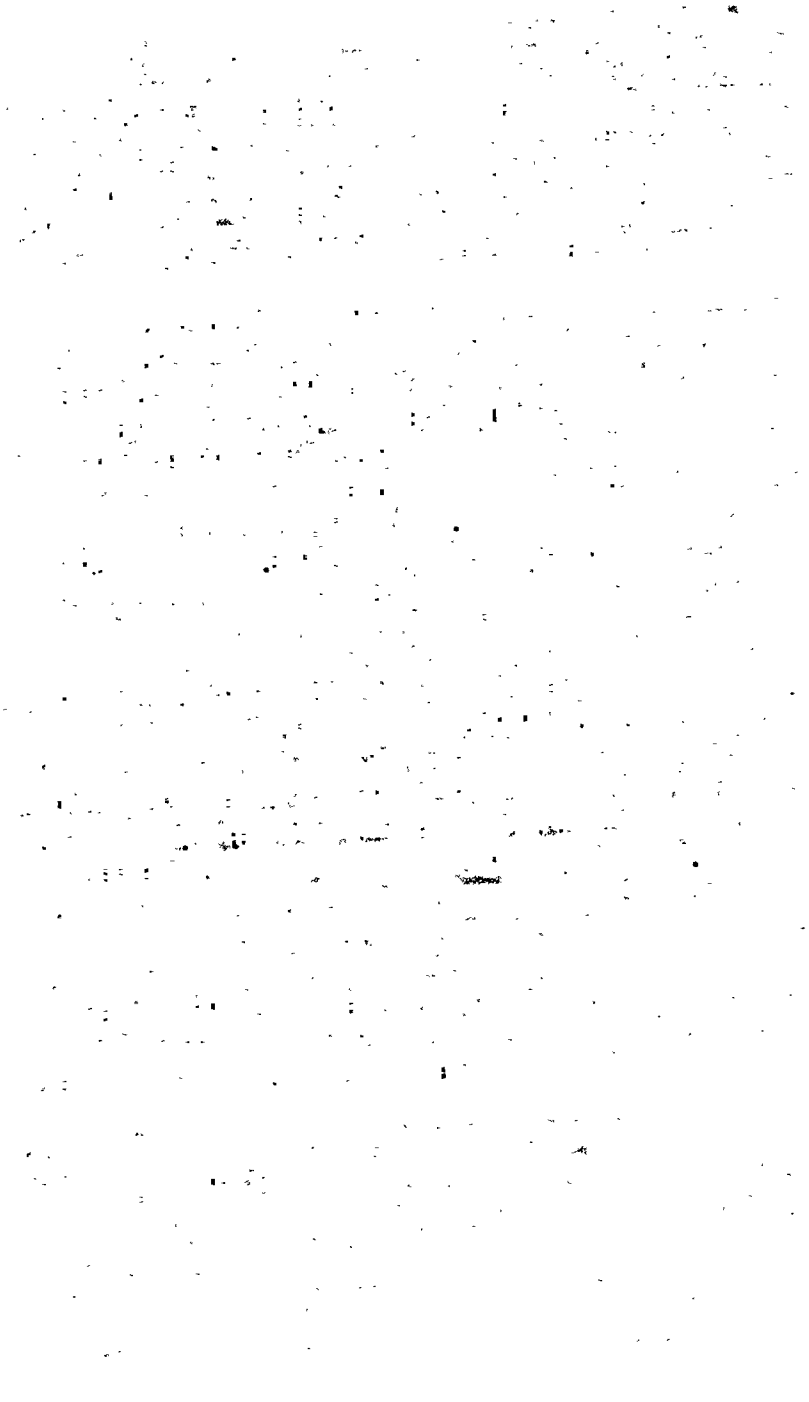

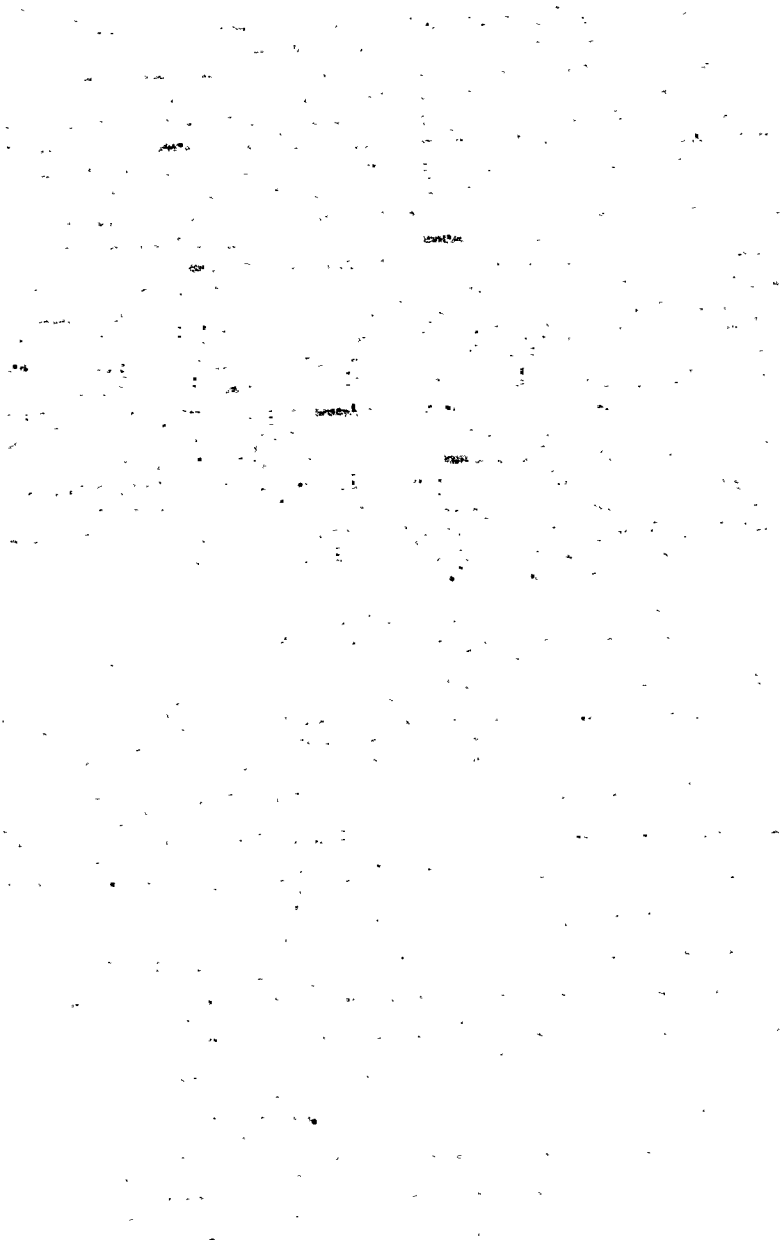

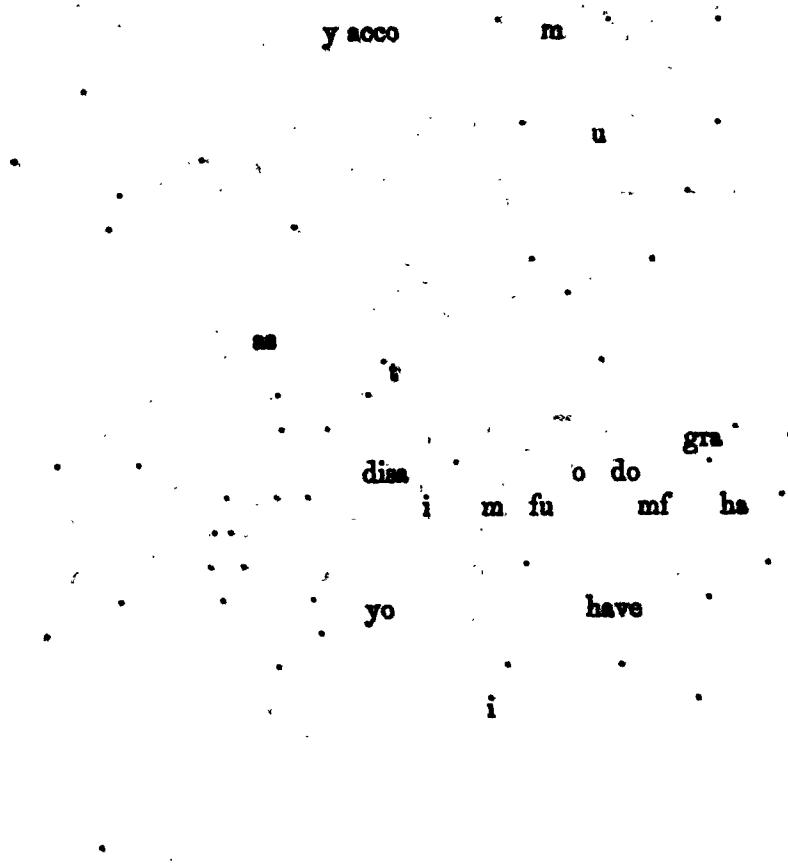
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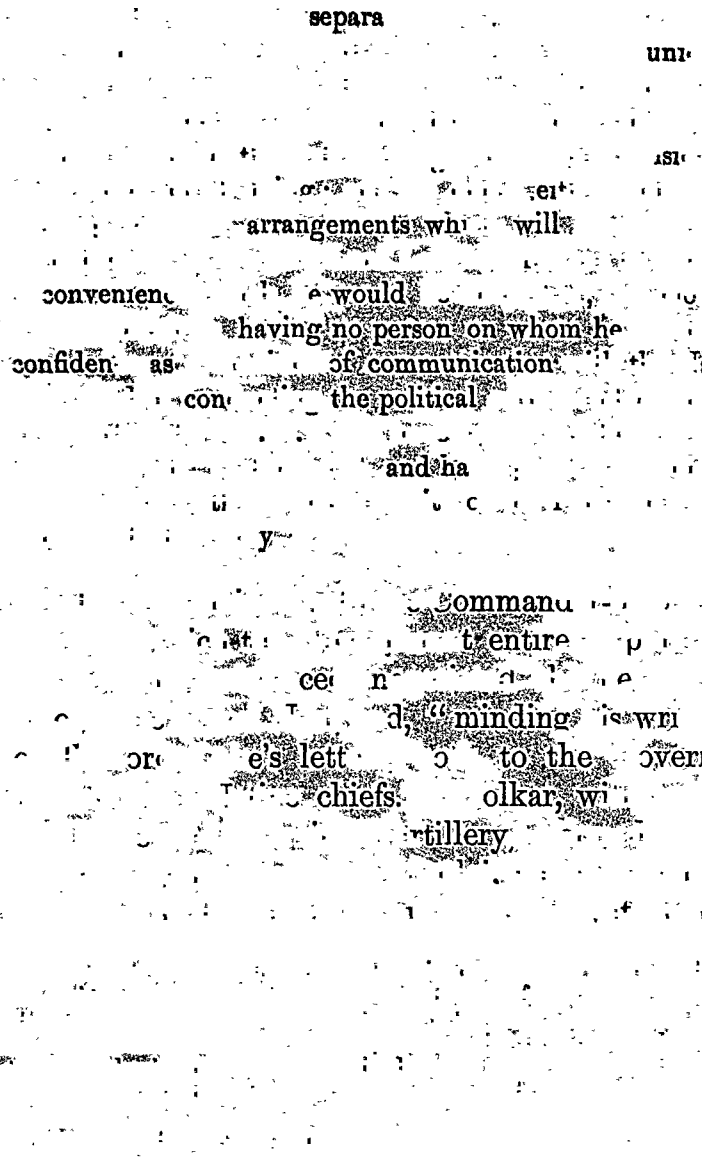

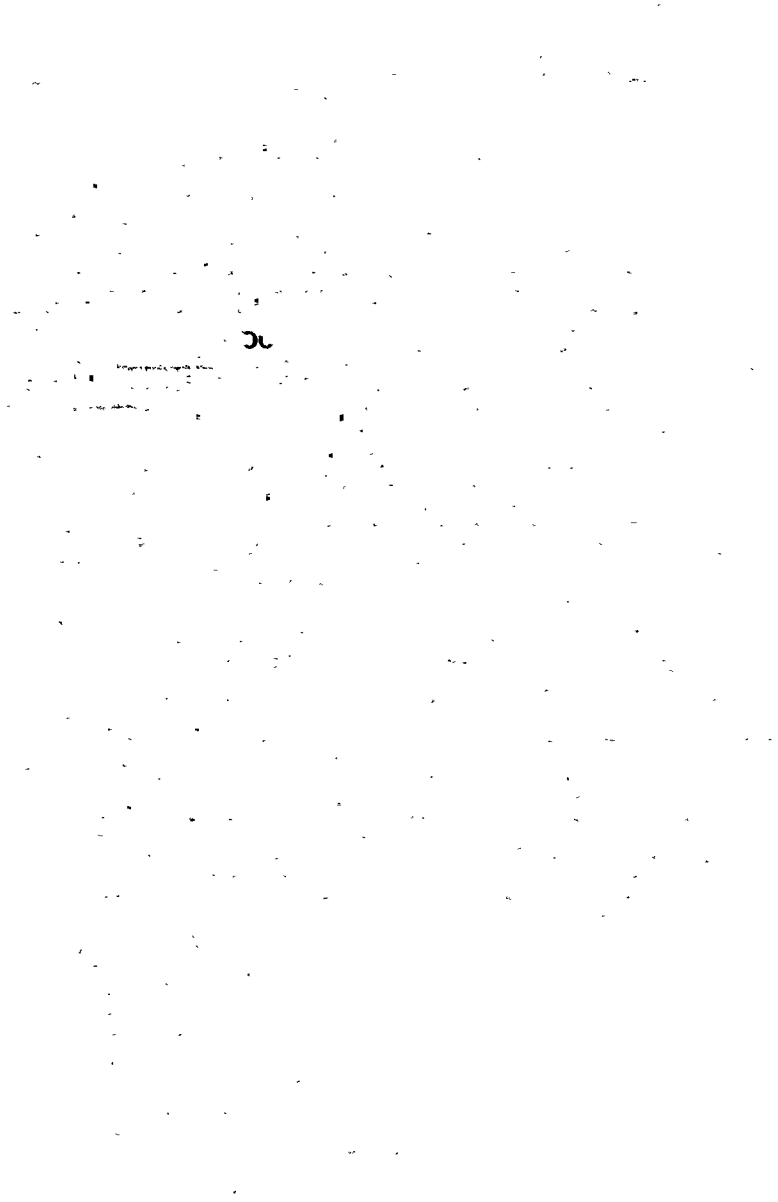

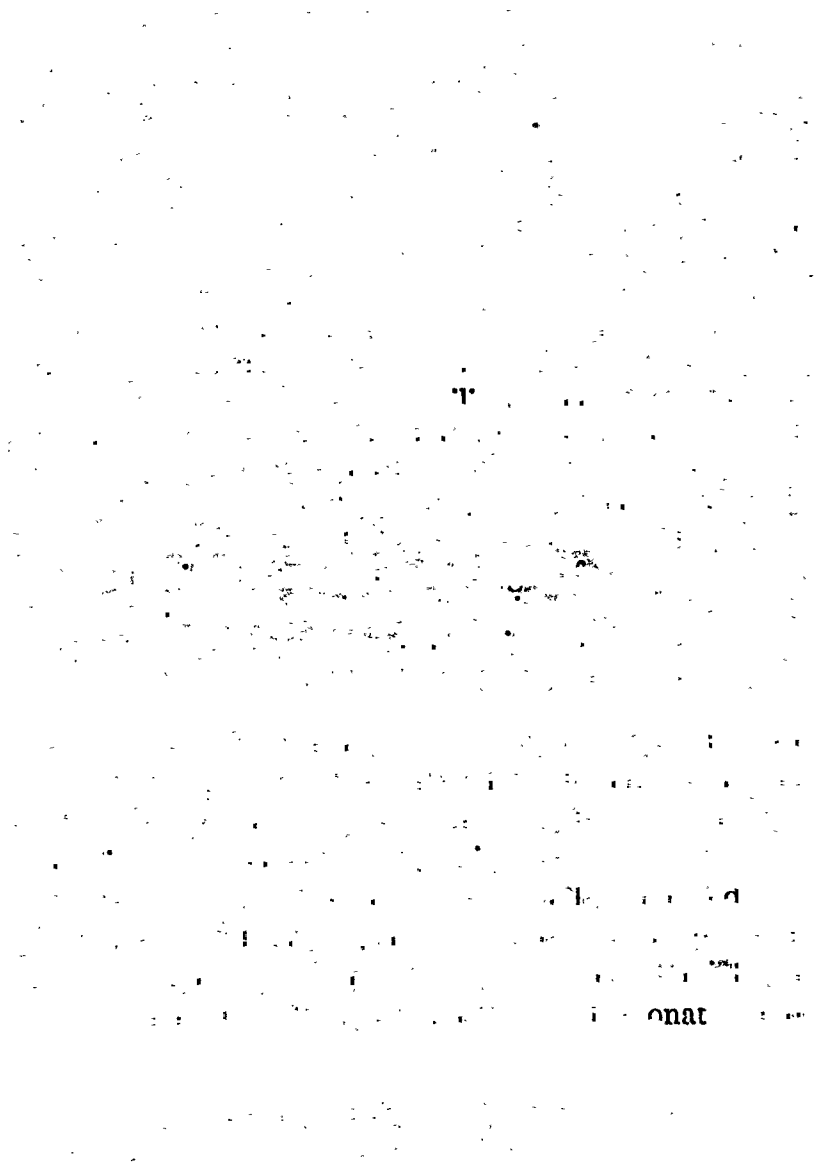

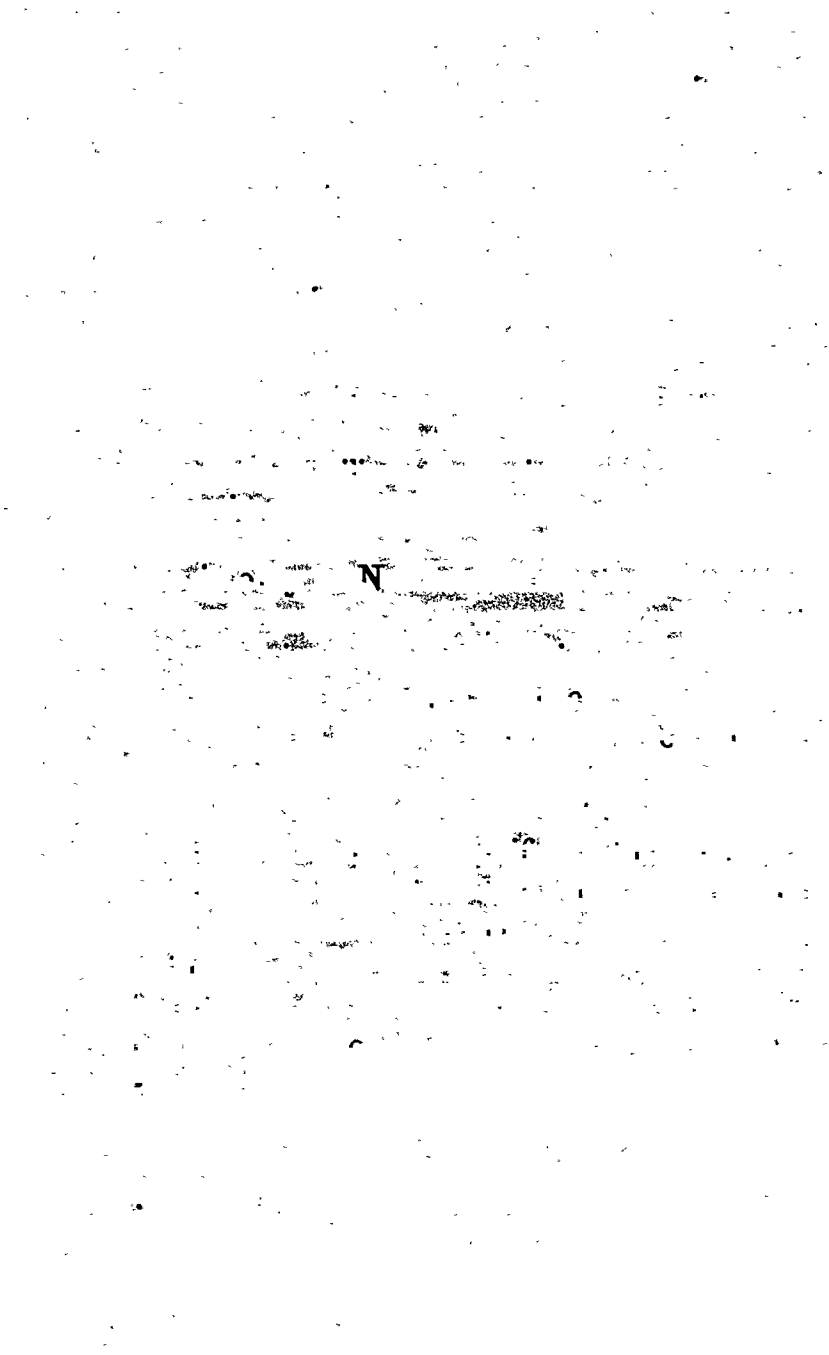
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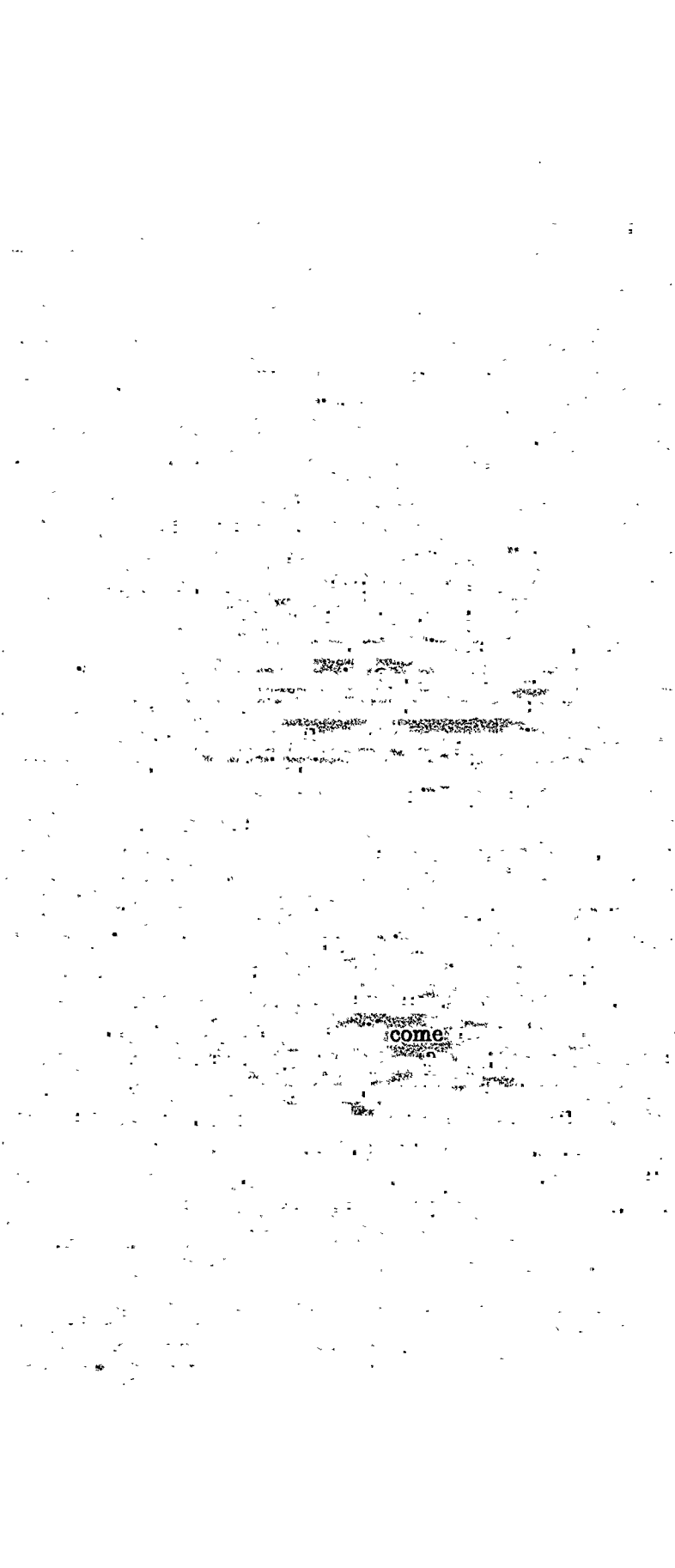
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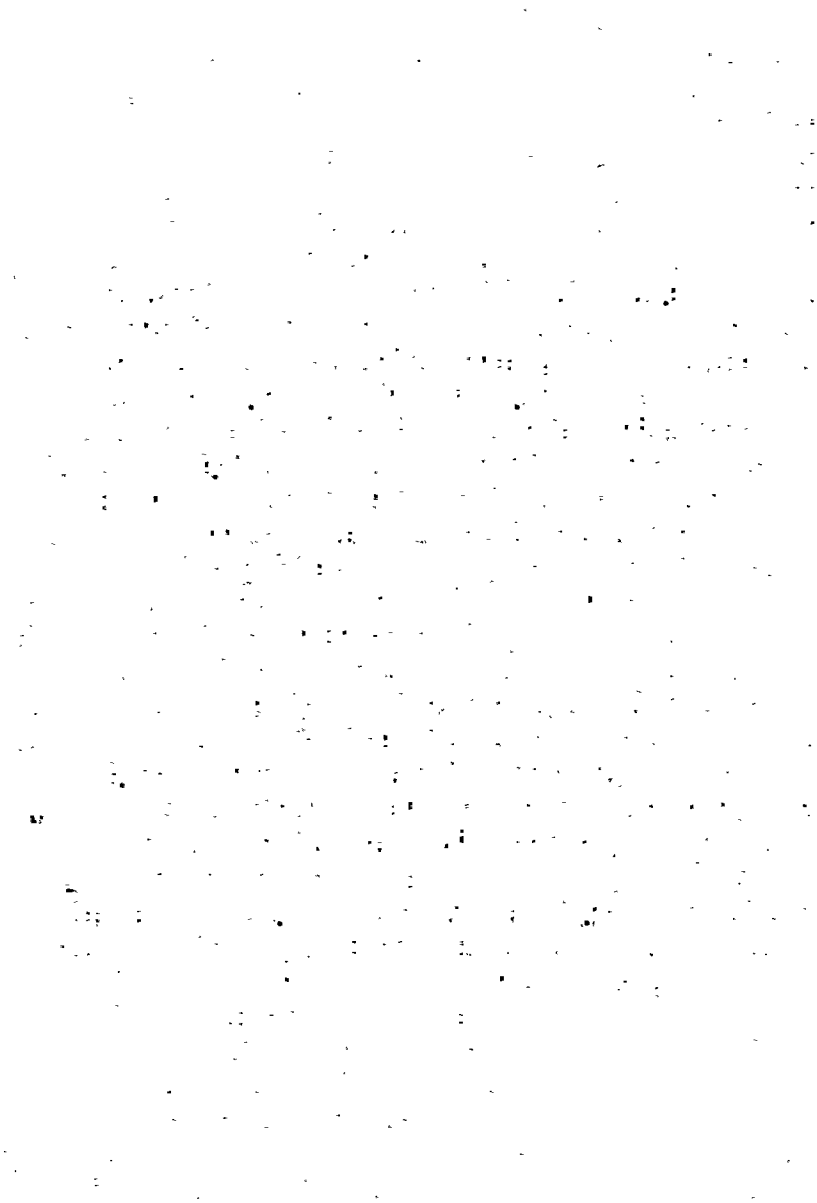

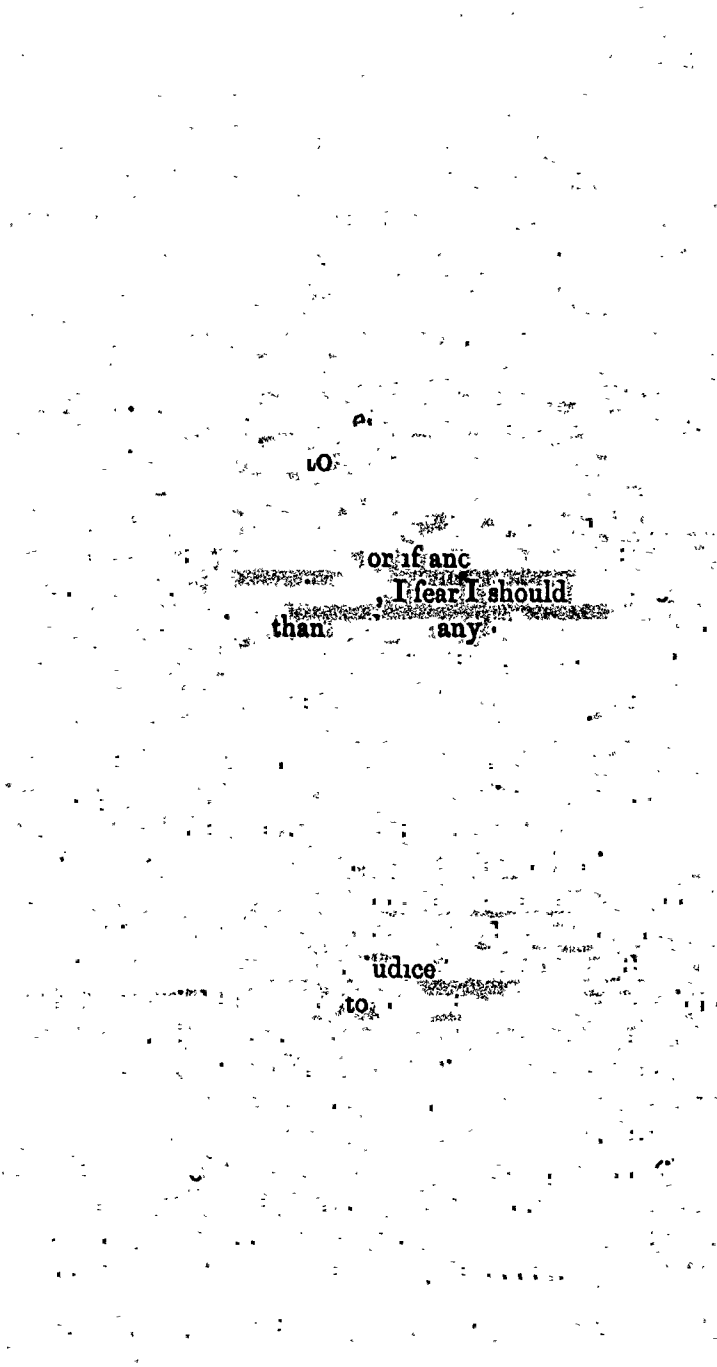

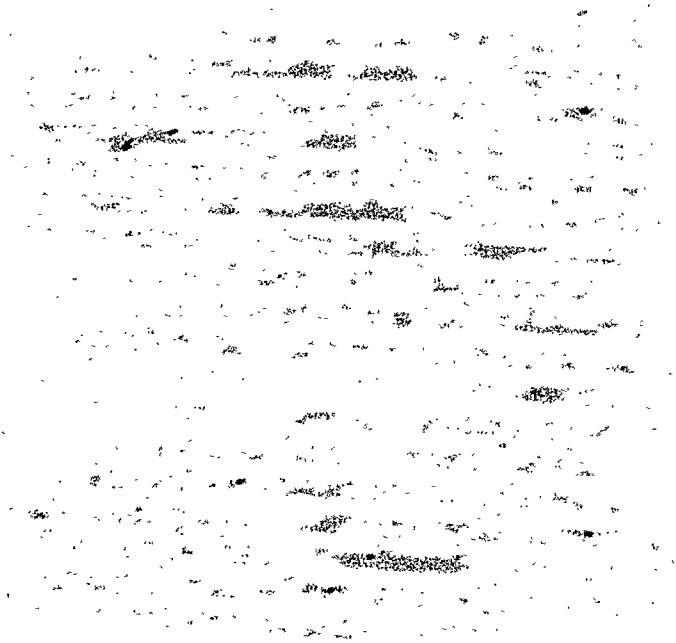

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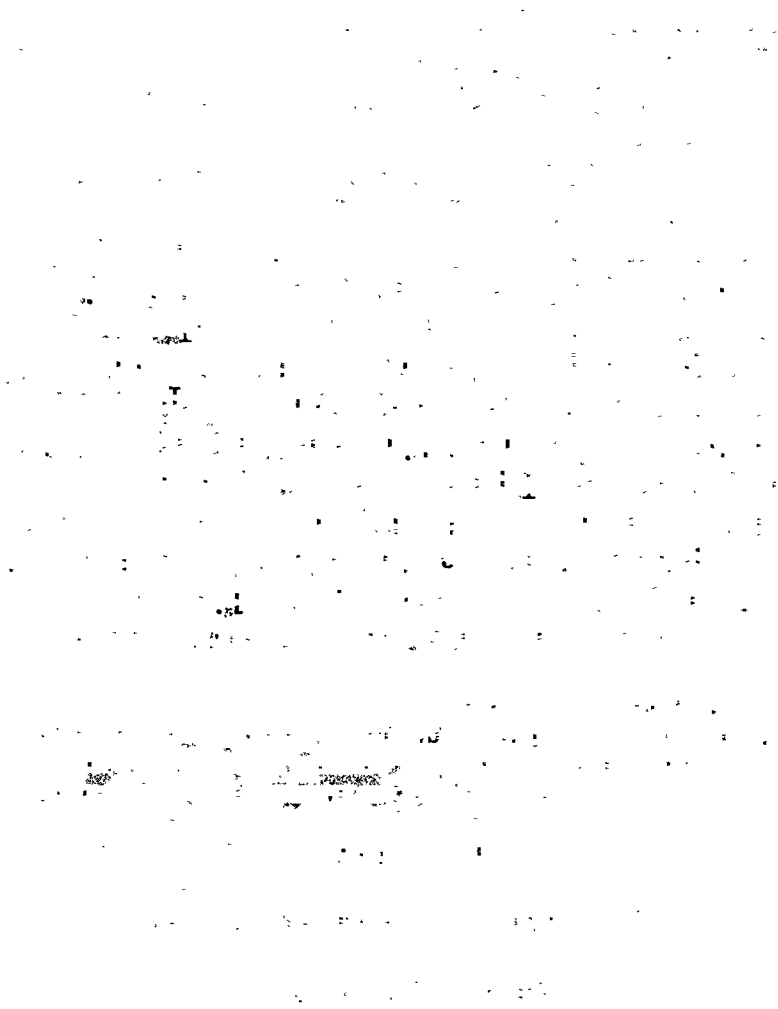

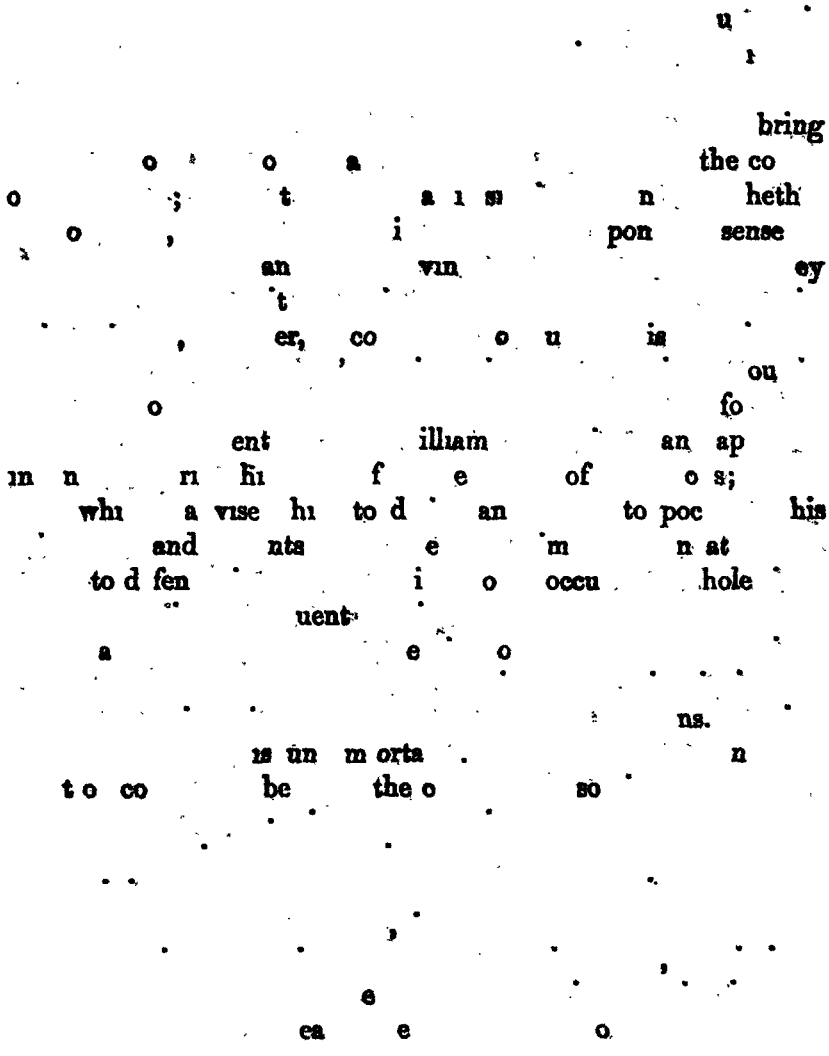

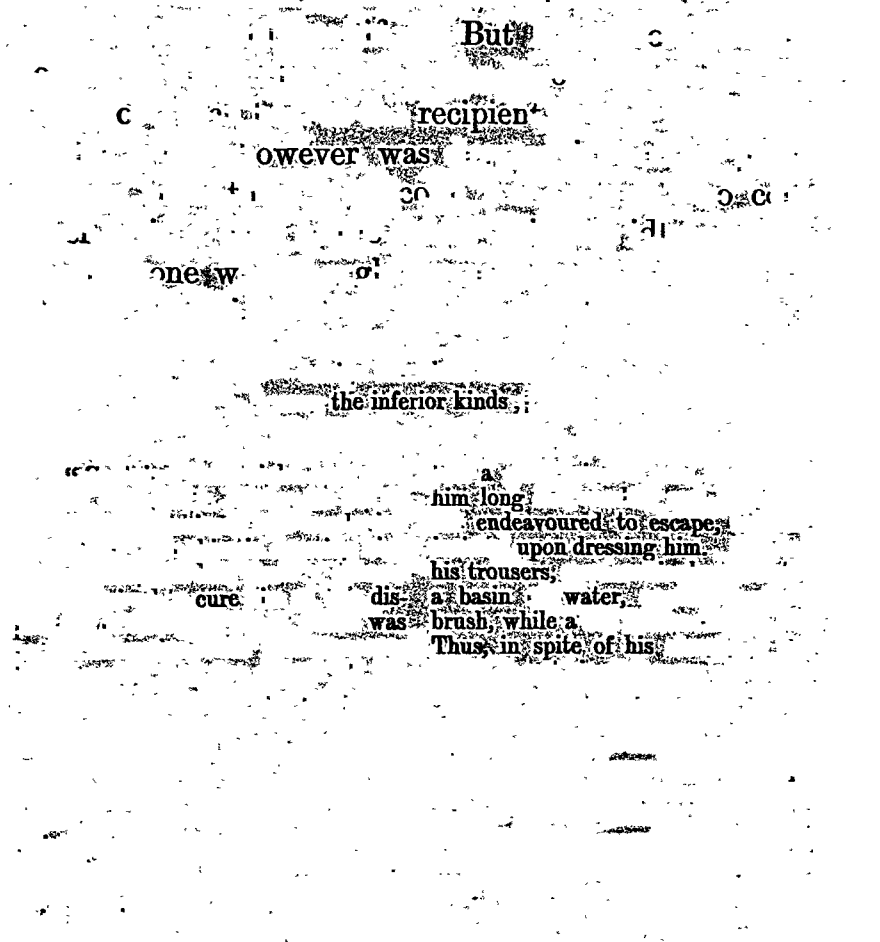

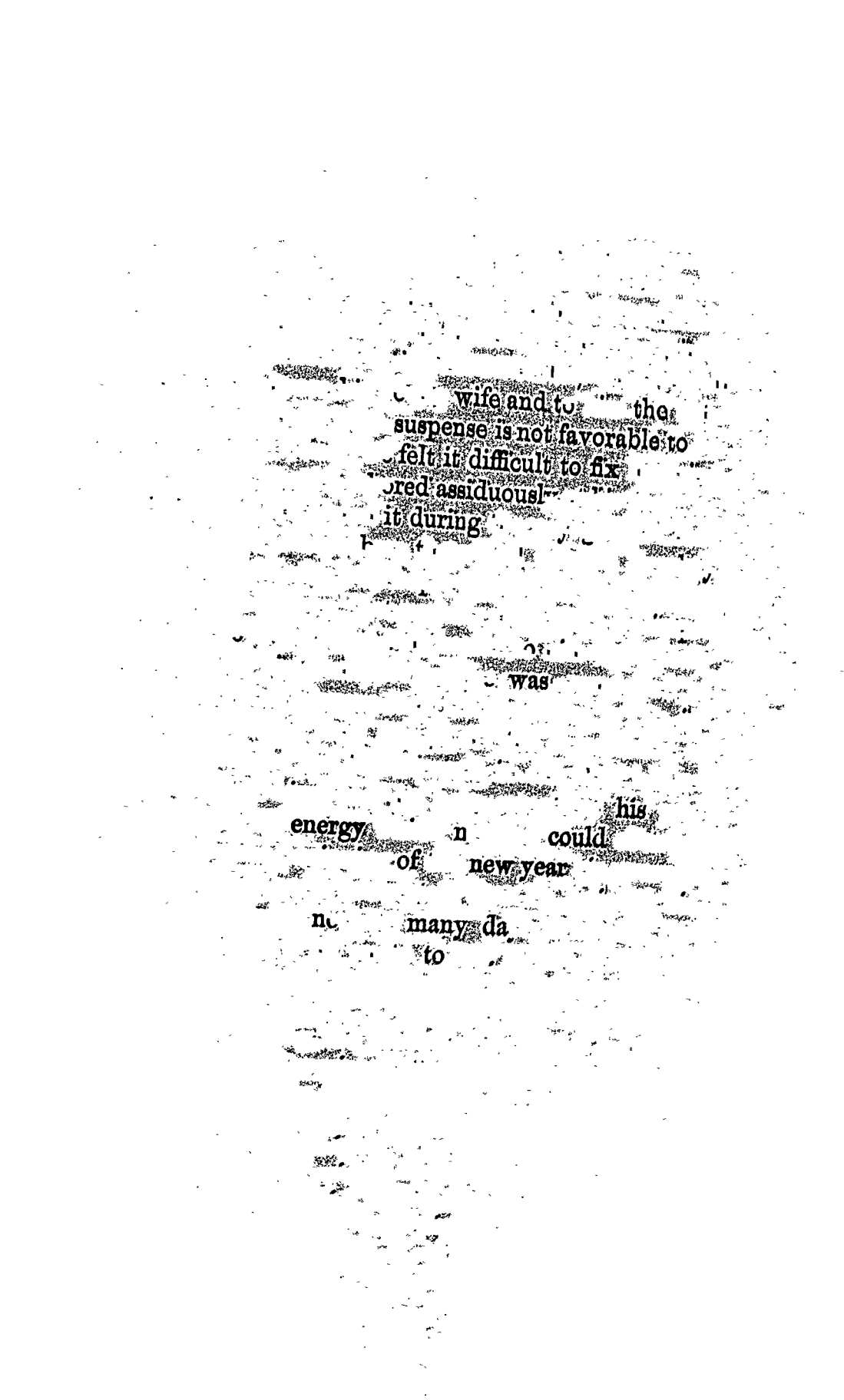
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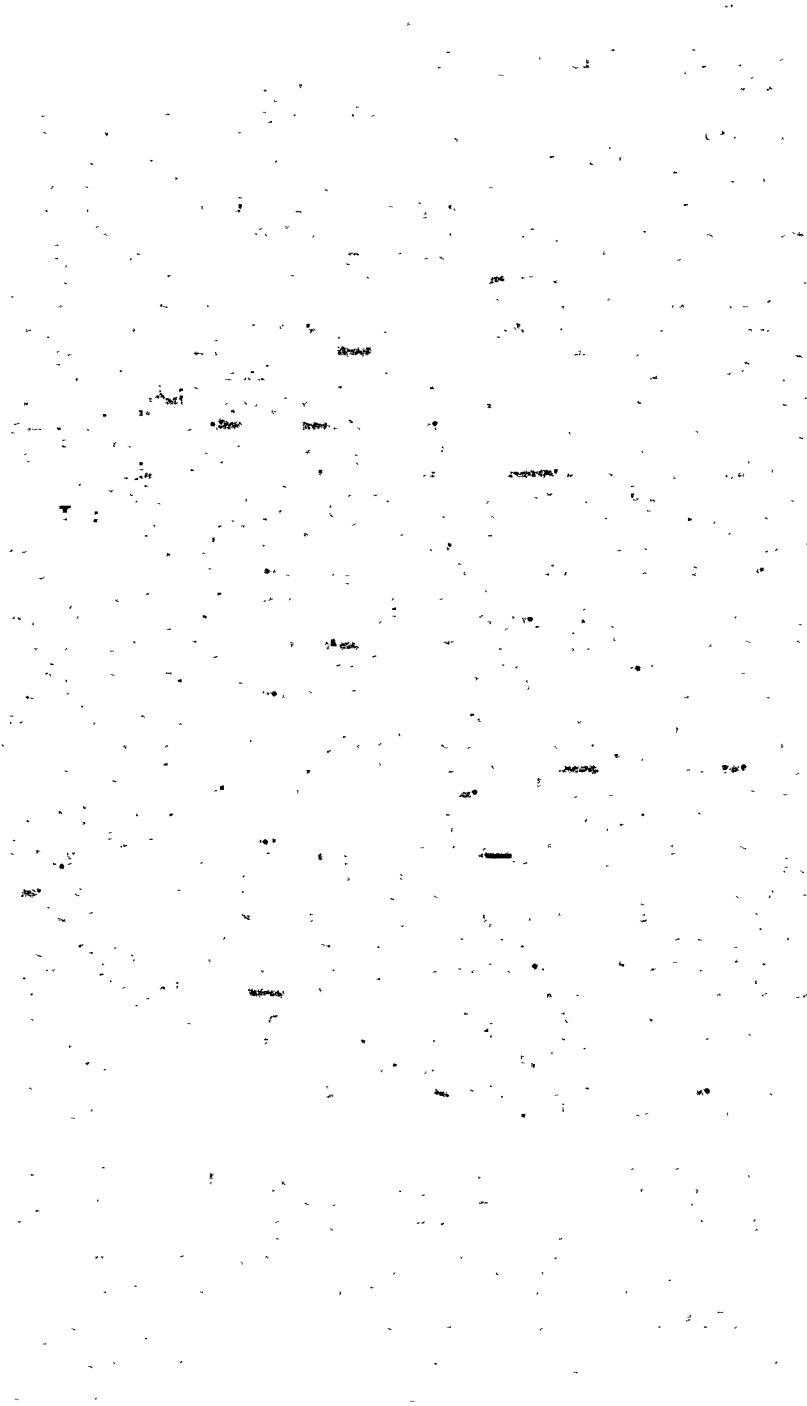

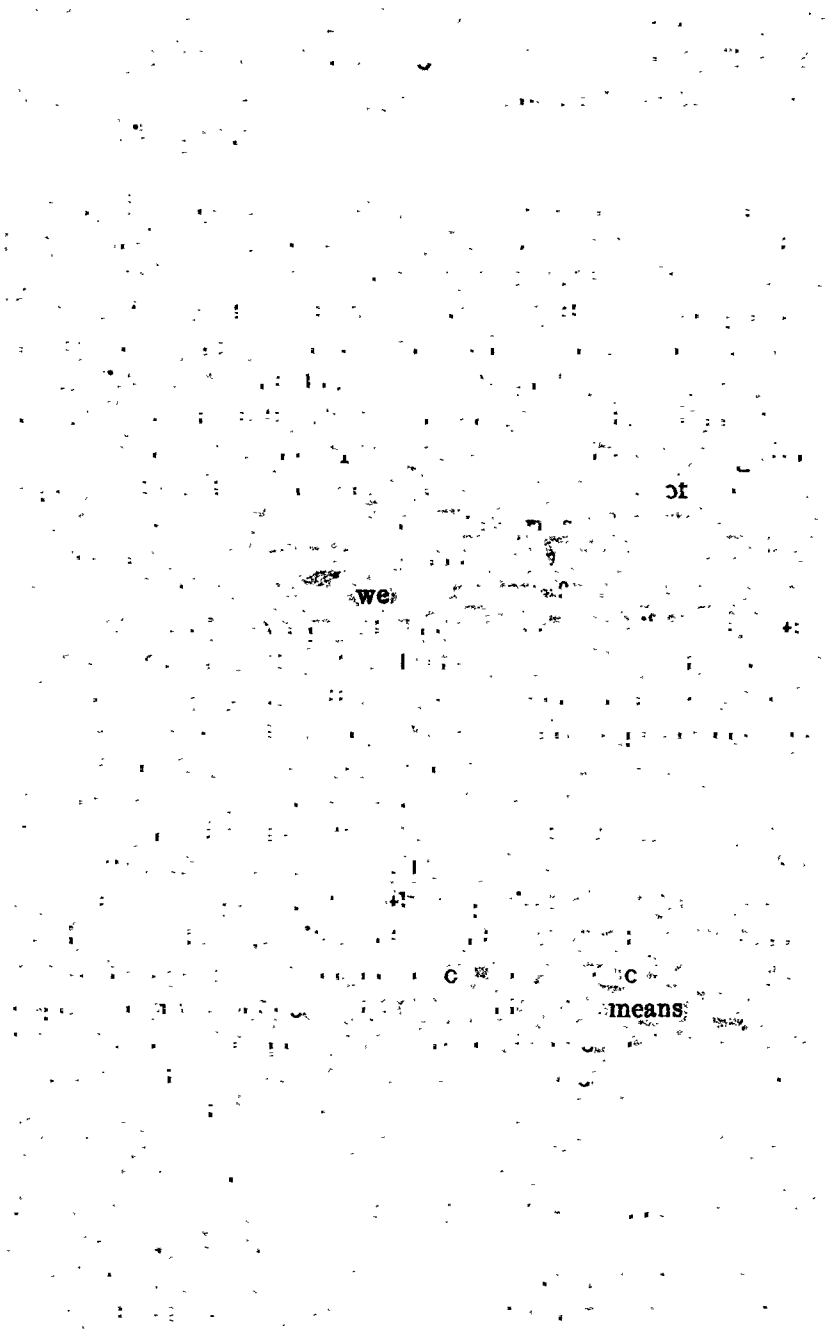

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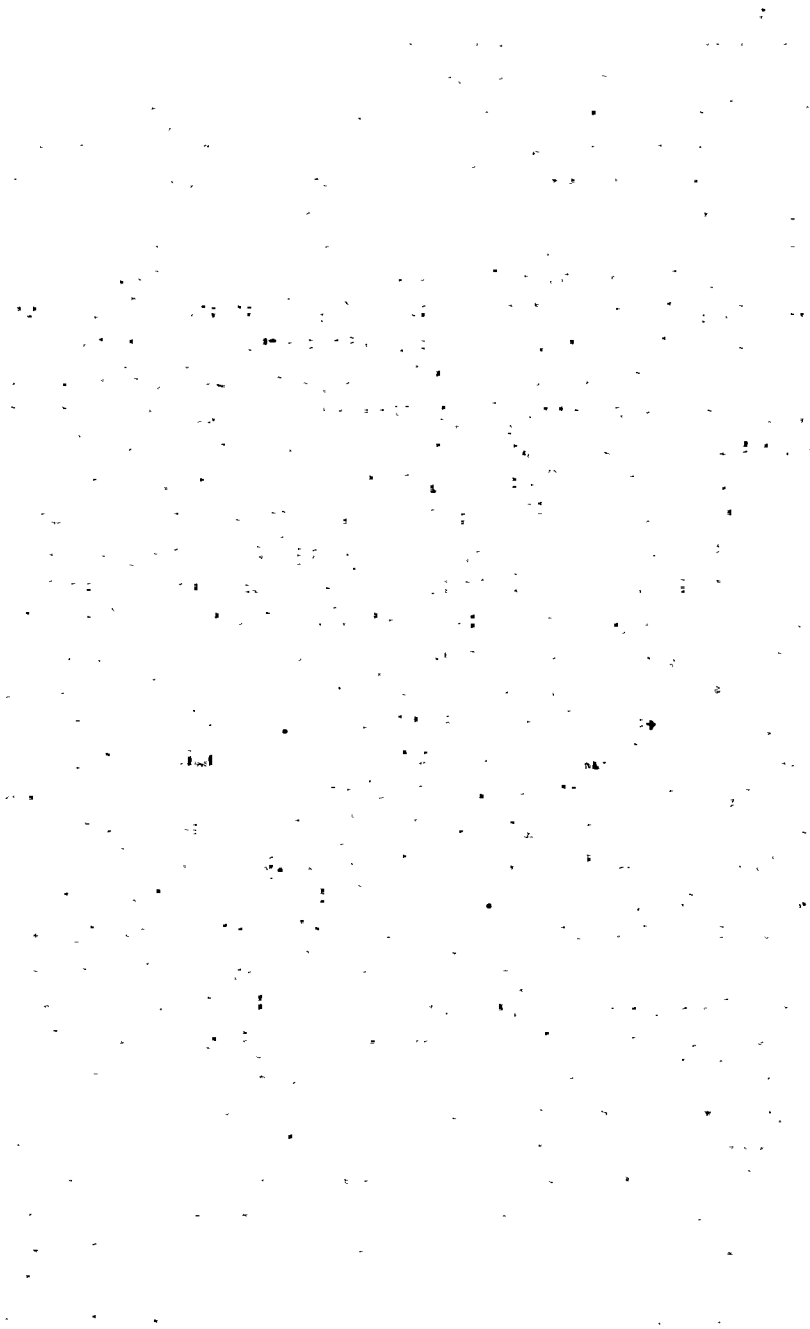

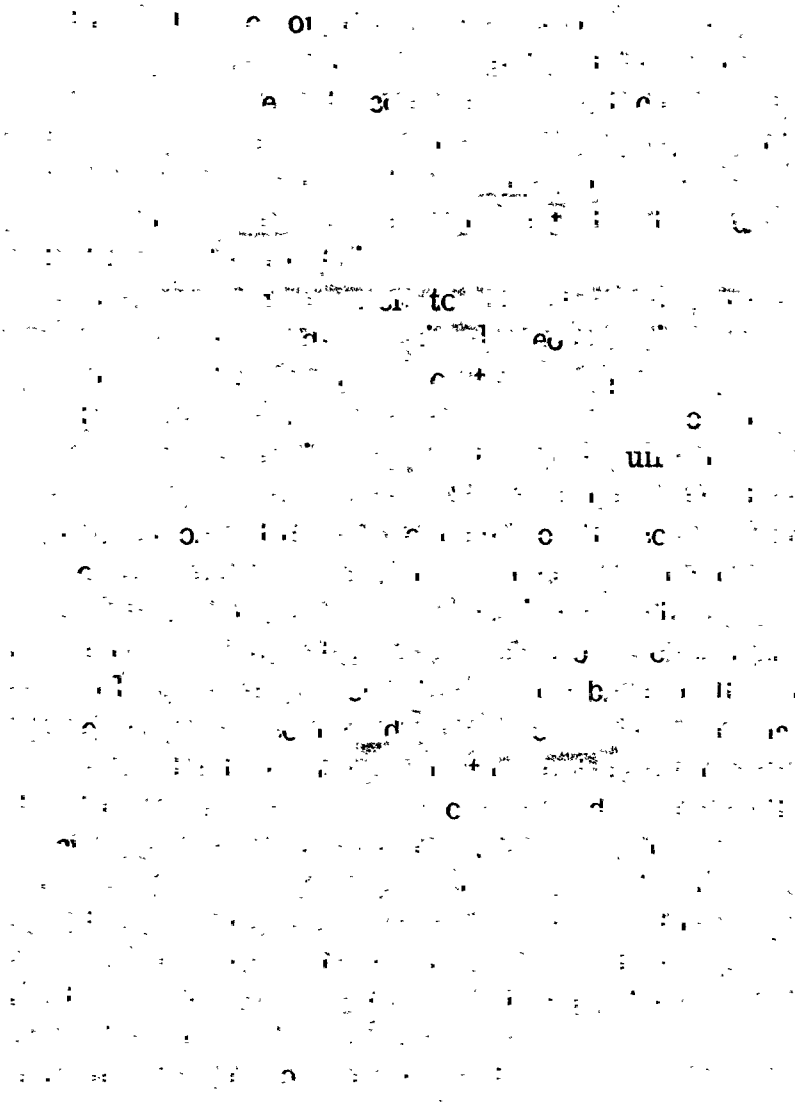

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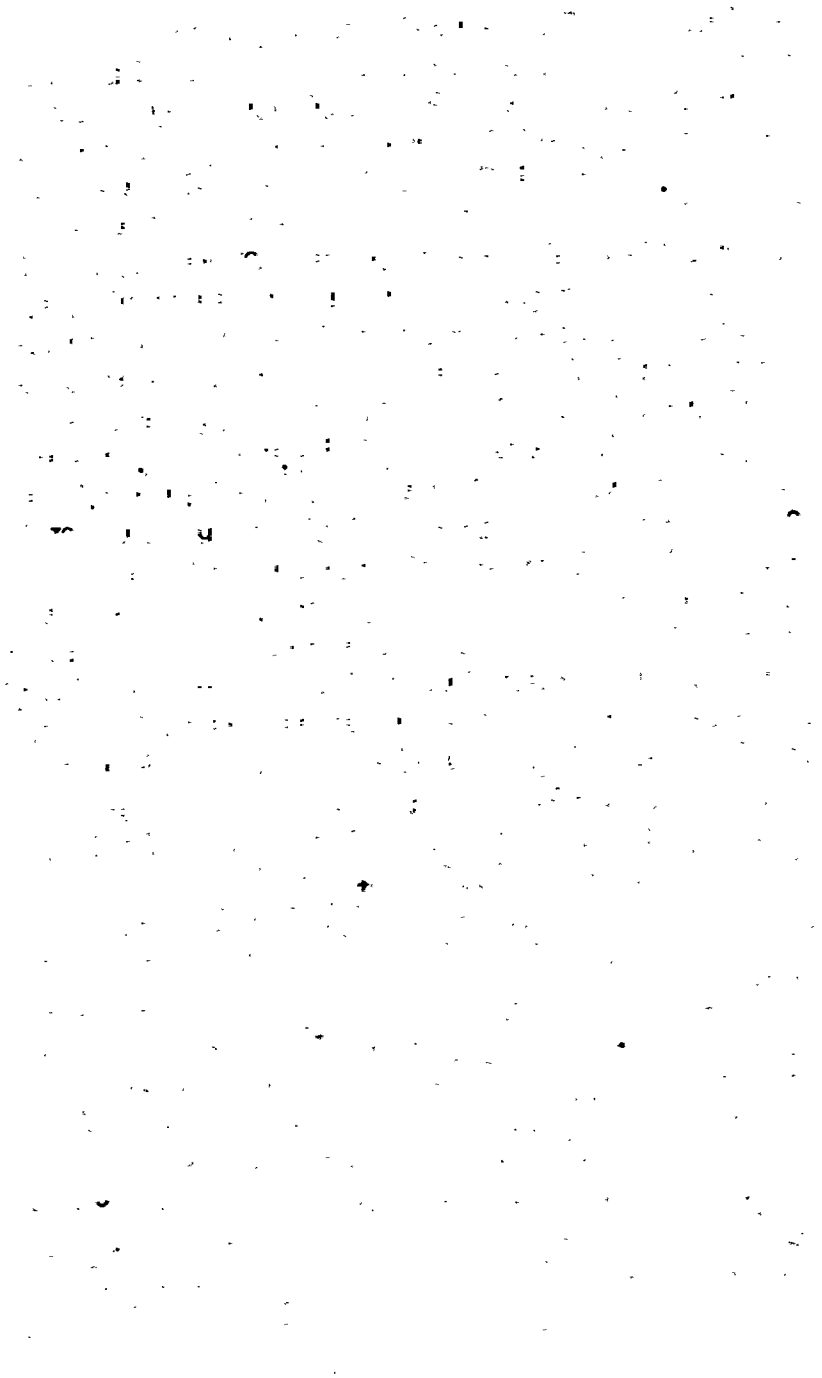
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